Scotland and the American Civil War: A Local Perspective

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I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis,

and that the work incorporated in it is entirely my own.

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Abstract

This study of Scotland's experience during the American Civil War explores the subject from a distinctly local perspective. It seeks to examine the diverse effects which the Civil War had upon the Scottish economy and upon Scottish political attitudes, in order to determine the factors which influenced Scottish Civil War opinions. This study highlights the importance of distinguishing the local experience from the national experience, and as a result, provides a comprehensive analysis of the particular effects which the different Scottish regions experienced as a result of the Civil War. It also demonstrates the importance of local identity as a force upon attitudes towards international, as well as local, affairs. By examining the effect of the American Civil War upon the distinctive local economies of Dumfriesshire, Paisley, and the Scottish Borders towns of Hawick and Galashiels, this study provides a more detailed analysis of the economic effect of the Civil War in Scotland; and establishes the basis for examining the extent to which economic circumstances determined Civil War attitudes.

As well as being economically distinctive, however, the three regions under discussion in this thesis were characterised by a strong liberal tradition which makes comparison of their Civil War attitudes equally important. In order to explore the impact which the American Civil War had upon Scottish liberalism, this thesis provides a comprehensive analysis of local press reaction and local liberal opinion towards the Civil War and the political issues which the War provoked. It illustrates the many personal conflicts which Scottish liberals had to confront, and which led to a plethora of liberal opinions on the American Civil War. By focusing on the wide range of opinions expressed about the Civil War in the Scottish towns under discussion, this thesis argues that political principle on matters such as democracy, slavery, and national self-determination, was a much more important determinant of Scottish Civil War attitudes than was economic materialism. This examination of Scottish attitudes towards the American Civil War is set within the wider context of the Scottish-American relationship, which was established in the eighteenth century, and which endured beyond the American Civil War period. By examining Scottish perceptions of America in the antebellum period of 1832 to 1860, this thesis explains the motives behind Civil War attitudes, and also highlights the fact that the Scottish interest in the American Civil War was not an isolated phenomenon. This study demonstrates that the Civil War marked the culmination of Scotland's fascination with America and its political institutions. It also illustrates that this fascination existed on a local level, resulting in a profoundly diverse Scottish reaction to the War, which was not definable solely by locality, political affiliation, or economic circumstance.

Contents

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Thanks must next go to the excellent libraries and their staff, upon which I have relied for the past four years. In Dumfries, I must thank the staff at the Ewart Library for their assistance. Praise must especially go to their wonderfully efficient collection of newspapers on microfiche. This extremely accessible source has been invaluable, and is a provision of which they should be proud. Thanks also go to Marion Stewart at Dumfries Archive Centre for her assistance in unearthing letters and other source materials which have been of great use to me. Other local libraries have also served me well, including the staff at Paisley Central Library, who provided me with access to newspapers and to their unique Paisley Pamphlets Collection. I must also thank the staff at Hawick Library for searching out nineteenth-century historical works which made my research on the Scottish Borders considerably more straightforward. Equally, thanks must go to the staff at Galashiels Library, and praise for the easy access to hard copies of newspapers which they provide. Finally I must acknowledge the work of the staff at the larger libraries which I have consulted: the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh University Library, the Newspaper Library at Colindale, and the Mitchell Library in Glasgow. The latter, in

particular, must be praised for its provision of such an excellent public facility, and I must especially thank the staff of its Glasgow History Room, for their efforts in providing access to newspapers unavailable elsewhere; and to the staff at the Social Science Department of the Library for searching out the obscure trade statistics which I required.

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Finally, however, I must give my greatest thanks to my husband, best friend, and continual support, Mark Peters. As a history teacher, he has understood the obsession which I have inevitably exhibited towards the American Civil War and nineteenth-century Scotland over the past four years, and he has been an unswerving support. I am particularly grateful to his uncomplaining resilience in spending virtually every weekend in a variety of libraries, and for providing me with much needed encouragement during the more difficult periods of this research. Without him, this thesis would have been a much more difficult task to complete, and I therefore pay tribute to him here.

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Introduction

Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to provide an examination of local Scottish attitudes towards the American Civil War of 1861-65. A great deal of work has been carried out on the subject of the overseas impact of the War, but most of the work on Britain's reactions has concentrated upon the English experience.[1] Two important studies have examined the impact of the Civil War upon Scotland, although they provided an analysis of the general Scottish reaction, the focus being on Edinburgh and Glasgow.[2] This thesis will attempt to place local reaction to the American Civil War in both a Scottish and a British context. This approach is strengthened by the distinctive sense of local culture which existed in the nineteenth century, a period which also witnessed a great deal of growth in provincial political activity. This strong sense of 'place' makes a local examination of Civil War attitudes extremely fruitful. One reason for the strong nineteenth century sense of local identity was the vibrant and imaginative local press which existed in most provincial towns, and which both consolidated and represented local identity and opinion. National newspapers in the modern sense did not exist in the nineteenth century because of communication difficulties, and local newspapers provided readers with news of international events. This local perspective on international matters is peculiar to this period, and this aspect of the nineteenth century is therefore extremely important. A local analysis of the impact of the American Civil War upon Scotland is also essential in order to provide an insight into the different economic impacts of the War. There has been too much generalisation about working-class attitudes towards the Civil War, which has failed to take into account the vastly differing effects experienced by a variety of

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[1] Adams, E.D. Great Britain and the American Civil War. 2 vols. London, 1925; Allen, H.C. 'Civil War, Reconstruction, and Great Britain'. In Heard Round the World: The Impact Abroad of the Civil War, pp. 3-96. Edited by Harold Hyman. New York, 1969.

[2] Botsford, R. 'Scotland and the American Civil War.' Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2 vols, 1955; Finnie, H.M. 'Scottish Attitudes towards American Reconstruction, 1865-1877.' Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 3 vols, 1975.

industries.[3] This thesis, by researching the impact of the American Civil War upon the agricultural trade of Dumfriesshire, the cotton industry of Paisley, and the woollen industry of the Scottish Borders will provide such a comparative study. Finally, the Scottish reaction to the American Civil War is important because the War marked a culmination of Scottish interest in political issues such as democratic reform and localism.

This analysis will also take its place within the broader field of Scottish-American history. Historiography in this area has developed since the 1950s, and has covered the wide range of connections between the two countries since the 18th century.[4] The concentration of this thesis upon mid-nineteenth century Scottish-American relations will attempt to fill a gap in the current historiography. A great many strengths already exist in the literature in this area. The study of Scottish-American history has a strong academic tradition and offers much, especially in the area of Scottish influences upon America and upon the cultural and economic links between the two countries. In addition, there is also a body of work which has assessed the impact of the American Civil War overseas. In this context, there have also been moves towards a more localised approach to this subject, with a number of studies looking at the impact of the War upon Lancashire and Yorkshire.[5] There are also a number of limitations present in the current literature, however. The localised treatment of the Civil War overseas, which we have just mentioned, does not extend to the Scottish localities. Indeed, the two main investigations into Scotland and the Civil War have also neglected this local aspect. Moving away from the local perspective, there is another major deficiency in the existing literature upon

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[3] See, for example, Ellison, M. Support for Secession: Lancashire and the American Civil War. Chicago, 1972.

[4] See, for a discussion of this work, Sher, R.B. 'Scottish-American Cultural Studies, Past and Present'. Introduction to Scotland and America in the Age of the Enlightenment, pp. 1-27. Edited by Richard B. Sher and Jeffrey R. Smitten. Edinburgh, 1990.

[5] Ellison, Support for Secession; Augar, P.J. 'The Cotton Famine: A Study of the Principal Cotton Towns during the American Civil War.' Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Cambridge, 1979; Greeves, O. 'The Effects of the American Civil War on the Linen, Woollen and Worsted Industries of the UK.' Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Bristol, 1969.

Scotland and the American Civil War. Both Botsford and Finnie began their studies at the start of the Civil War, a trend which this thesis will show misses out a major factor in determining Scotland's reaction to the Civil War. In order to provide a firmer foundation to Civil War studies it is necessary to examine the antebellum period in greater detail. Looking generally at this mid-nineteenth century period, very little attention has been paid to Scottish attitudes towards American institutions and events.[6] Some work has been carried out upon the nineteenth century cultural relationship between Scotland and America, while the British (or, more accurately, English) reaction to American political developments has also been examined.[7] There is a need for work to be done in this area to both explore Scottish reactions to such events and to provide the foundation of Civil War attitudes.

Despite its limitations, however, the existing literature has proved to be extremely useful in establishing the framework of this thesis. Firstly, the literature on the history of the American colonies provides a valuable background to the study of Scottish-American links. It establishes the connections which have existed between the two countries since the 18th century, and also provides important information about the extent of Scottish emigration and settlement. This produces one explanation for the large Scottish interest in American social and political developments. The literature on the British and Scottish reaction to the American Civil War also provides the opportunity to uncover the gaps in the current historiography which, as we have seen, are the lack of local treatments, economic approaches, and investigation of the antebellum period. With respect to the economic approaches to this subject, English studies, especially those of

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[6] Lillibridge, for example, declared that his research had, by necessity, concentrated upon London, but that an examination of the provincial press was also needed: Lillibridge, G.D. Beacon of Freedom: The Impact of American Democracy upon Great Britain, 1830-1870. Pennsylvania, 1955, p. 151.

[7] Hook, A. Scotland and America: A Study of Cultural Relations, 1750-1835. Glasgow, 1975; Lillibridge, Beacon of Freedom; Thistlethwaite, F. The Anglo-American Connection in the Early Nineteenth Century. New York, 1959.

Ellison, Greeves, and Augar, have proved particularly useful in providing standards by which other local areas can be judged. In particular, Ellison's work, which argued that deprivation arising from the Cotton Famine led to support for the Confederacy, and Augar's work, which claimed that political factors were more important than the Cotton Famine in determining attitudes, provide a useful basis for approaching the effect of the Cotton Famine on Paisley opinion. In addition, Greeves' work on the Yorkshire woollen industry during the Civil War has proved invaluable when studying the impact of the War on the Scottish Border woollen industry: providing a good overview of the broader British industry, it enables us to explore the distinct nature of the Borders trade.

Methodology and Sources

A word or two is necessary to explain the choice of towns which have been covered and the neglect of their surrounding areas. The decision was taken to examine Dumfriesshire's reaction to the American Civil War, but not the neighbouring region of Galloway. Dumfries was deemed to be the most important town in the South-West of Scotland, having a strong provincial identity and a history of radical sympathies. It was also home to the main agricultural auction markets in the region, as well as a small woollen manufacturing industry. The decision was therefore taken to make Dumfries the focus of this examination of the South-West region. Similarly, Paisley has been examined, but not the wider county of Renfrewshire, which takes in small towns such as Barrhead and Johnstone. This decision was taken because of the strong identity which Paisley displayed in the nineteenth century and the town's own sense of separateness, especially from Glasgow, which was illustrated in its struggle to secure greater public relief during the Cotton Famine. In the Borders, too, it was decided that the thesis would concentrate on the two large manufacturing towns of the region, both of which had a strong radical past: Hawick and Galashiels. Further possibilities exist for research in the Borders towns

of Kelso, Selkirk, Jedburgh and Walkerburn, however, and these deserve further coverage. There are, therefore, further opportunities available for research to be carried out on the reaction of Scottish towns and cities to the American Civil War. Research in these places will lead to a comprehensive understanding of Scotland's reaction to the American Civil War, which was begun by Botsford in 1955, and is continued by this thesis.

The principal primary source for this thesis has been the local press of the localities under examination. The main strength of this source is that it provides a contemporary perspective on local cultures and responses to American affairs. The mid-nineteenth century was an important time for local journalism in Scotland, with most towns home to a vital and influential local press. Some towns, such as Dumfries, were, at times, home to four newspapers, with even less active towns, such as those in the Borders, home to two newspapers. Providing a mixture of local, national, and international news, these papers provide extremely valuable source material in the study of local history. Comprehensive in their coverage, and unrivalled in their detail, these papers provide us with considerable insight into local thoughts, morals, and prejudices. Particular use has been made of editorials as an approximate estimation of local opinion; local trade reports, in order to estimate the effect of the Civil War on local economic conditions; accounts of public meetings held to discuss the Civil War; descriptions of local lectures, as an indication of local interest in relevant topics; and letters from correspondents on the subject of the War.

In the local areas studied here, newspapers were either weekly or biweekly, covering the range of political opinions: Conservative, Liberal, and Radical. Good runs of newspapers remain extant in local and national libraries. There are, inevitably, deficiencies in the use of newspapers as a historical source: some of the smaller, more obscure papers are in short supply, while gaps of a month or less occasionally exist. In addition, there is sometimes a lack of knowledge about the ownership and editorship of

newspapers. Sometimes, too, articles may come from other newspapers, which is usually, but not always, noted in the papers. In order to overcome some of the problems noted here a number of approaches have been adopted. Firstly, the fact that all available newspapers have been examined for the whole 1832-60 period means that any small gaps in availability are less important. For example, Saturday editions of the Dumfries Standard are missing from February to November 1863, but because the Dumfries Herald and the Dumfries Courier enjoy complete runs, local events are still accounted for, which is especially important during 1863, when the effects of the Cotton Famine were being felt. Secondly, with regard to articles reprinted from other newspapers, the general rule has been that when another paper was indicated as the source of an article, it has not been used. An exception to this has been applied to newspapers in the 1830s, when local newspaper journalism was less advanced, prior to the repeal of the Stamp Act. An example of this was the Dumfries and Galloway Courier and the Dumfries Times' use of articles from the London-based Morning Chronicle, the Scotsman, and the Edinburgh Evening Courant during the 1833 Nullification Crisis in South Carolina.[8] Being the only two newspapers in Dumfries at the time, it was decided that their choice of reprinted articles would still provide an insight into editorial attitudes towards America. In cases such as this, the origins of such articles have been acknowledged.

A word or two is necessary, however, to explain how the problems of bias and inaccuracy in the local newspapers has been tackled. Firstly, the difficult question as to whether editorial opinion matched local opinion in the nineteenth century arises. The extent to which editorials served to influence or to reflect public opinion is impossible to ascertain. On the one hand, the newspaper was a business which needed to maintain its readership, and would not therefore wish to alienate readers with unpopular opinions. On the other hand, people purchased newspapers for a number of reasons besides editorial

[8] The Dumfries and Galloway Courier, 8.1.33, 5.2.33, 23.4.33.

opinion, and so purchase of a newspaper is not necessarily an automatic indication of agreement with its views. It has not therefore been assumed that newspaper opinion matched local opinion. Newspaper opinion nevertheless remains of interest to us because of its insight into one important current of local opinion, which must have reflected the attitudes of at least some of its readership. Secondly, two types of trade reports exist: the first provides prices of produce at markets or sales; and the second provides a subjective account of local conditions. The second is clearly less reliable than the first, but in the case of local textile conditions, is often the only source of information which we have. While caution about the origin of trade information and the motives behind it has been exercised, generally accounts seemed to correlate with national conditions, which tends to verify their authenticity. For example, the trade reports in the Border Advertiser and the Hawick Advertiser correlate with the national trade conditions described by Greeves,[9] and the national descriptions provided by the various trade circulars whose comments were published by the two Borders papers. Thirdly, accounts of public meetings and lectures offer a particular dilemma. Later chapters will examine this in greater detail, but the main issue which has to be confronted is the bias which can occur in the reporting of meetings, especially the omission of speeches, or inaccurate descriptions of attendance. Finally, letters from correspondents are useful if real names are provided, and if the subject of the letter is particularly interesting, or the comment especially incisive. In many cases, however, *nomes de plume* are used, which may suggest insertion of a fake letter at worst, or a letter without an apparent origin, which makes analysis of it difficult, at best.

The chapter on the Scottish Borders woollen industry has made considerable use of Government economic statistics to judge the effect of the American Civil War upon that industry. This source has the advantage of being much more objective than the trade reports of local newspapers. These latter reports clearly risked being biased, especially as

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[9] Greeves, 'Civil War', pp. 152-68.

firms could manipulate the information which they gave to the press. What the Government statistics offer in objectivity, however, they lack in terms of consistency. It will be observed that changes to both classifications and unit sizes changed during the 1860s, which makes year to year comparisons difficult. For example, in 1861, cloths were placed in the category "Woollen and Worsted Manufacturers' Cloths of all Kinds," but in 1862, were divided into a number of categories, including "Broad Cloths: Plain," "Narrow Cloths: Plain," "Broad Cloths: Coatings/Duffels all wool," and so on. In addition, whereas in 1861, blankets were measured by the yard, in 1862 they were measured by the 'number' exported.[10] This discrepancy has been addressed by adjusting the use of classifications to ensure that the same woollen products are examined from year to year, and by using financial or monetary values instead of varying weights and measures to assess year on year changes.

A number of further contemporary sources have also been used in this research, and their strengths and weaknesses must be commented upon. The first of these are contemporary books written by local authors, either at the time under discussion, or twenty or so years later. The big advantage which such work provides is the contemporary sense of place and time which is free from the prejudices of the modern historian. Such books, however, do suffer the disadvantages of being neither newspapers nor modern histories. Due to the inevitable selectivity of their authors, they are not as accurate a contemporary source as newspapers. Conversely, they have less historical perspective than the modern historian, especially on a subject such as the American Civil War, when the impact of international events upon localities is under discussion. A second contemporary source are the collections of local pamphlets available to the historian in local archives. These have proved particularly useful in the study of Paisley. What these provide, however, in

[10] Parliamentary Reports, Vols. 768 and 769. Annual Statements of the Trade and Navigation of the UK with Foreign Countries and British Possessions in the Years 1861 and 1862: General Exports, pp. 218-23, 179-84.

the way of accounts of local meetings and as an alternative to newspapers, they lack in terms of availability, and a certain tendency to be dominated by religious tracts, especially on subjects such as temperance. The tendency for some years to be better represented than others in the pamphlet collections does not tell us whether some periods were more active than others, or simply whether material was not saved for the local archives. A final contemporary source which has been used, are personal letters, especially those involved in business correspondence. These provide a unique source, given the obvious tendency of people to dispose of such material. They provide an insight into the views of 'ordinary people', rather than the usual journalistic and political opinion. The main problems associated with this type of source material is the likelihood of missing letters, difficulties related to deciphering handwriting, and the sometimes sporadic nature of political comment. In addition, those letters relating to business or financial affairs can sometimes be difficult to follow, given that such letters are transmitted between two individuals discussing the finance of their business, and in possession of facts and figures denied to the historian. In conclusion, then, a number of sources have been drawn upon which serve to complement each other. For example, what the newspapers provide in the way of political breadth and coverage of time, they sometimes lack in terms of in-depth discussion. This gap is filled by sources such as personal letters and pamphlets, which have limited availability but manage to offer a greater insight into matters such as business affairs and attitudes towards issues such as slavery.

Analysis of the Antebellum Period

Adams, in his seminal work, Great Britain and the American Civil War, argued that an analysis of the antebellum period was essential because "the American Civil War, as seen through British spectacles, could not be understood if regarded as an isolated and

unique situation."[11] He claimed that "the conditions preceding that situation - some of them lying far back in the relations of the two nations - had a vital bearing on British policy and opinion."[12] This thesis attempts to examine Scottish reactions to antebellum America, and consequently differs from the work of Botsford and Finnie because of the decision to begin the research in 1832 rather than in 1860. The justification for examining the forty years prior to the outbreak of the American Civil War will become very clear, however. Essentially, when beginning the research on local attitudes towards the Civil War, it became clear that to treat the Civil War period in isolation would be a mistake, as Adams had pointed out. There would be less indication as to how Civil War opinions originated, and why observers held the particular views that they did. In order for the historian to be able to examine attitudes about the American Civil War, he or she must have some comprehension of the interest in and attitudes towards America in the period prior to the conflict. How, for example, can the historian evaluate the anti-Northern argument that the United States was too large to sustain a democratic government without examining attitudes towards American expansion in the 1840s? How, too, can he or she begin to understand whether pro-Confederate attitudes arose out of anti-democratic sentiment or from a belief in the right of nations to self-determination? The decision was therefore taken to examine the antebellum period in order to provide a more solid foundation to the study of Civil War attitudes. As a result, the views of newspapers have been examined to ascertain the consistency of their attitudes both to American events, and to the political and social theories which the American Civil War would later raise. Examination of the antebellum views and actions of individuals who made comment upon the Civil War was also crucial in order to provide some background to their opinions.

Once this decision had been taken, it was necessary to decide when to begin this analysis. A number of dates suggested good possibilities: firstly, the American

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[11] Adams, Civil War, vol. 1, p. 2.
[12] Adams, Civil War, vol. 1, p. 2.

Revolutionary period of 1775-83, which marked the ultimate confrontation between America and Britain, and the first time that significant comment arose in the British press about the American situation. In addition, the role which Scots played as Loyalists in America and as supporters of the American revolt in Scotland, illustrated the very strong Scottish interest in this period. This starting point was not chosen, however, owing to the large amount of work which has already been undertaken on this subject.[13] Furthermore, the fact that the Revolution took place almost ninety years before the Civil War means that few newspapers existed in both periods, and no commentators lived through both periods. The second potential starting point for this study could have been the War of 1812 between Great Britain and America. Although important because it involved conflict between the two countries, this date was also deemed unsuitable for a number of reasons. Firstly, the war merited rather less attention in Britain than did the simultaneous war with France. Secondly, the six weeks which news took to reach Britain from America meant that comment would be inevitably sporadic. In addition, there was unlikely to be continuity in the availability of newspapers in this period and the Civil War period, making comparisons difficult. Thirdly, and most importantly, being a war about trade and navigation rights, the conflict offered less in the way of potential for political and social comment from Scottish observers. It was due to the importance of this final factor that the year 1832 was decided upon as a starting point. This date was an important one in both Scotland and America, and marked the beginning of important political and social change in both countries. It was the year of the Nullification Crisis in South Carolina, which saw the state mount strong opposition to federal tariff policy. This crisis was, arguably, the first time that a sectional crisis seriously threatened to occur in the United States, and consequently drew a good deal of attention from the Scottish national and provincial press. The Nullification Crisis provided Scottish commentators with a significant opportunity to

[13] See Sher's discussion of this work in 'Scottish-American Cultural Studies', pp. 7-10.

debate the political issues which the crisis threw up: majority-rule, federal systems of government, the right of citizens to refuse to obey laws, and the feasibility of the concept of 'Union' in the American context. The Scottish reporting of the Crisis set the framework within which America would be discussed in Scotland for the rest of the mid-century period, to culminate in the American Civil War.

The 1830s in America also saw the rise of Jacksonian Democracy, with the enactment of universal (white) male suffrage. The 1840s witnessed the territorial expansion of the United States, and the 1850s saw the further development and intensification of the sectional crisis. These American developments were of great interest to Scots, given the important developments also taking place in Britain at that time. The year 1832 saw the passing of the Reform Act which began to enfranchise the middle classes for the first time, and the dissatisfaction of those who did not benefit from its provisions meant that political developments in America were consistently interesting to Scots, especially during the Chartist agitation of the 1830s and the 1840s. American democracy formed the basis of discussion between supporters of reform who pointed to the success of the 'model republic,' and opponents of reform who used events such as the Nullification Crisis to point to the overwhelming failure of the 'democratic experiment' in America. The mid-century period also saw the Disruption of 1843 and the short-lived National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights of 1853. Both these events involved the issue of central control over provincial matters, and illustrated an empathy with issues of central-local conflict.[14] The period between 1832 and 1860 was therefore an extremely important time in the history of both Scotland and America, and just as America had gained so much socially, politically, and intellectually from Scotland throughout the eighteenth century, so Scotland gained from the experience of America in the nineteenth century. Sher discussed how this American influence did, in fact, go all the way back to

14 For an examination of this mid-nineteenth century period in Scotland, see Morton, G. Unionist Nationalism: Governing Urban Scotland 1830-1860. East Linton, 1999.

the eighteenth century, but it seems that very little work has been done on this impact in the nineteenth century.[15] This thesis attempts to fill that gap.

Structure of Thesis

Finally, a word or two is necessary to explain the organisation of chapters in this thesis. The Bibliographical Review which follows this Introduction outlines in greater depth the historiography of this subject area, and pays particular attention to the impact of the Scots emigrants upon America, and the Scottish-American cultural relationship which developed in the eighteenth century. This chapter therefore serves to establish the topic and to emphasise the historical importance of the relationship between Scotland and America, and the relevance of Scottish local reactions to the American Civil War. The second chapter concentrates solely on the Nullification Crisis of 1832-33, and Scottish newspaper reaction to it. The Crisis warrants a full chapter because of its importance as the first manifestation of sectional conflict in America, and the avid Scottish interest in the Crisis. The Scottish response to the Crisis was disproportionate to its length, and this indicates the interest which it provoked. Two subsequent chapters investigate the reactions of commentators in Dumfriesshire and Paisley to events in antebellum America. These three chapters provide a solid foundation for analysis of attitudes expressed in these regions towards the American Civil War. Chapter five provides an overview of Scotland's reaction to the Civil War, while Chapter six examines the effect which the Civil War had upon Dumfriesshire agriculture and woollen production. This chapter will therefore help to dispel the belief that non-industrial areas escaped the effects of the Cotton Famine. Chapter seven explores the response of Dumfriesshire to the Civil War, concentrating on newspaper and other local political and non-political opinion on the war. Chapter eight examines Paisley's experience during the

[15] Sher, 'Scottish-American Cultural Studies', p. 9.

Cotton Famine, providing information on the impact upon factories and unemployment, attempts to relieve economic distress, and the conflicts which arose between Paisley and outside authorities over the question of responsibility for relief. Chapter nine builds on the preceding chapter, and examines Paisley's response to the Civil War, which was responsible for the economic and social distress being endured. Chapter ten explores the experience of the Scottish Borders region during the Civil War, so heavily dependent upon the woollen trade, and serves as a complement to the preceding chapters on Dumfriesshire and Paisley. No antebellum study had been made of this area in this thesis, as its main role is to provide an example of an area whose industry actually benefited as a result of the American Civil War. It therefore serves as a useful yardstick by which to judge the reactions of Paisley, an area with a similar political outlook, but with a radically different economic and industrial experience during the Civil War period. The main aim of these chapters is to evaluate the extent to which economic circumstances contributed to the formulation of Civil War attitudes. The final chapter examines the influence of the Civil War upon British political reform in the late 1860s, especially from a local Scottish perspective. Together these chapters will provide a distinctly local perspective upon a question which was last examined twenty-four and forty-four years ago respectively, namely Scotland's reaction to the American Civil War. By examining the local experience of Scotland during the 1860s, greater understanding of the distinct response of Scotland to the American Civil War will arise.

Chapter 1: Bibliographical Review

Chapter 1: Bibliographical Review

The American Civil War and the way in which it was perceived in the local Scottish context was but one aspect of the relationship between Scotland and America. The war was the culmination of a mutual relationship which had developed and intensified throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Established through trade links in the eighteenth century, the relationship thrived on an intellectual exchange embodied in the period of the Scottish Enlightenment, and the shared blood ties which mass emigration created. Consequently, the two countries shared a fascination with each other. Early American society derived much of its intellectual, cultural, and social development from Scottish intellectuals, literature, and emigrant influence, while Scotland became increasingly aware of the social, political, and economic opportunities which lay on the other side of the Atlantic. Attitudes in Scotland towards the American Civil War were therefore influenced by this relationship, and interest in the conflict exceeded that in other overseas events, as a result of the connections which the two countries shared. In addition, when we uncover the specific influence of local identity upon this interest, we will see just how unique the Scottish reaction to the Civil War was. The aim of this chapter is to establish the nature of the Scottish-American relationship, with particular emphasis upon the emigrant link and the cultural and intellectual exchange between the two countries, as it was here that the greatest bonds were formed. A great deal of work has been carried out on this relationship, and this introduction will examine the current historiography in this area. In addition, it will explore the literature which currently exists on the subject of Scotland and the American Civil War, and the subsequent need for a localised approach to this topic.

Before embarking upon an examination of Scottish-American connections, it is vital that we establish a framework within which to examine this topic, in order that we avoid some of the pitfalls encountered by earlier historians. Firstly, we need to ascertain the type of connections we are interested in, and ensure that we do not become too embroiled in a superficial discussion about the influence of Scottish emigrants in America. This subject is of great historical significance, but we need to also examine the motives behind emigration to America, especially the growing influence which American social and political institutions had upon the decision to emigrate. The increasing Scottish awareness of America meant that America was able to influence Scottish society in equal measure to Scottish influences on American society. We must be aware of the dual nature of the Scottish-American relationship, and the profound influence which each country had on the other, and that the relationship was not merely one which flowed from the River Clyde to the Chesapeake Bay. It is also vital, when examining Scottish influences on America, that we look beyond the influence of emigrants on local customs and traditions in their new home, and instead examine the influence of Scottish thinkers on American education, religion, and politics. This takes us to the second major area of the Scottish-American connection: the cultural and intellectual bond. It was in this area that the greatest achievements were made, on both sides of the Atlantic, and this connection is of great importance. In a summary of late twentieth century Scottish-American cultural studies, Sher described how the 1950s saw the advent of a more serious approach to the whole area of Scottish-American history, which went beyond a simplistic description of Scottish settlers in America, to an analysis of the similarities which linked the two countries as a result of their provincial status in relation to London. This period also saw the growth in recognition that America had been an important influence on Scotland from

the time of the Revolutionary War.[1] After this fruitful period during the 1950s, it was not until the 1970s that work on Scottish-American links began to appear again, with particular interest being shown in the Enlightenment period, while the 1980s saw a renewed interest in the study of emigration and settlement from Scotland to America.[2] The 1990s have witnessed further development of the theory of Scotland and America as provinces of London, with Landsman, in particular, describing how the provincial status of the two countries bound them together by their joint experience.[3]

Scottish Emigration to America

The important place which America held in the minds of Scots can be seen from the fact that, in the nineteenth century, emigration to America made up over forty per cent of the total emigration from Scotland.[4] The desire to start a new life in America was the result of three factors: land availability in America, employment and higher wages, and a growing awareness of the political and social benefits which American society offered. The first two factors are self-explanatory, offering economic opportunity to people displaced from their land, or suffering low wages and unemployment in the urban centres of Scotland. Of most interest to us, however, are the attractions which American society provided for the potential Scottish emigrant in the nineteenth century. These attractions were transmitted to the potential emigrant through two channels: newspapers, and personal accounts of friends and family who had already emigrated. Both of these sources

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1 Sher, 'Scottish-American Cultural Studies', pp. 1-8.

2 Sher, 'Scottish-American Cultural Studies', pp.10-13.

3 Landsman, N.C. 'The Provinces and the Empire: Scotland, the American colonies and the development of British provincial identity'. In An Imperial State at War: Britain from 1689 to 1815, pp. 258-87. Edited by Lawrence Stone. London, 1994; Landsman, N.C. 'The Legacy of British Union for the North American colonies: provincial elites and the problem of Imperial Union'. In A Union for Empire: Political Thought and the British Union of 1707, pp. 297-317. Edited by John Robertson. Cambridge, 1995.

4 Harper, M. Emigration from North-East Scotland. 2 vols. Aberdeen, 1988. Vol.1: Willing Exiles, p. 242.

of information were of vital importance to the decision to emigrate.[5] Bumsted described how America earned a growing place in Scottish consciousness after 1763. The Seven Years War (1756-63) was fought partly in North America, and enabled Scots to become aware of the history and geography of America. In addition, American issues were widely discussed by the press, and in many ways, America was advertised as the anti-image of Scotland, highlighting the superior economic and social living standards, compared with Scotland.[6]

The main attractions which drew emigrants to America in such great numbers were described in detail by Jones, but can be summarised under three main headings: the American political system, the financial system, and the perceived freedom and egalitarianism of America.[7] The main advantages of the American political system were seen to be the very things lacking in Scotland's own political system. The Radical War of 1820 illustrated dissatisfaction with the lack of political rights in Scotland. In the United States, on the other hand, there was no monarchy or aristocracy, and above all, universal suffrage existed in America by the 1830s. Radicals argued that the lack of a monarchy also meant that the financial system was less corrupt in America. As a result, the federal budget was balanced, and taxes were either lower than in Scotland or non-existent. A basic 'freedom' was also seen to exist in America in the nineteenth century, with social mobility a real possibility. America was therefore hailed as the land of the working man. This depiction of a democratic America would have struck a chord with disenfranchised Scots. The 1832 Reform Act only enfranchised the middle-classes, and it

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5 Harper, Emigration, vol.1, p. 2; Jones, D.L. 'The Background and Motives of Scottish Emigration to the United States of America in the Period 1815-1861, with Special Reference to Emigrant Correspondence', Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1979, pp. 404-6. For an economics-based approach to the subject of emigrant motives, see Baines, D. 'European Emigration, 1815-1930: Looking at the Emigrant Decision Again.' Economic History Review 47 (1994), 525-44.

6 Bumsted, J.M. The People's Clearance - Highland Emigration to British North America, 1770-1815. Edinburgh, 1982, p. 4.

7 Jones, 'Scottish Emigration', pp. 54-60, 112-3, 268-91.

was not until the 1868 Reform Act that the Scottish urban working-class gained the vote. In rural seats, workers had to wait until 1884. We can therefore see the extent of the influence which America exercised in the minds of ordinary Scots. The American experience excited Scottish minds and gave them hope at a time when their lives in Scotland offered them nothing but despair. Consequently, the lure of America was central in convincing them to emigrate.

The relationship between Scotland and America was a two way process in the nineteenth century. Not only had America become part of common knowledge in Scotland, and excited the Scottish mind, but the resulting Scottish emigration to America had deeply shaped American society. In 1790, the Scottish population represented 8.7 per cent of the population of the thirteen colonies, which made the Scots the second largest European group in the colonies, behind the 60.9 per cent English group.[8] Most Scottish emigration occurred in the first three-quarters of the eighteenth century, when between 62,000 and 75,000 Scots travelled to America, with the bulk of this emigration taking place between 1763 and 1783.[9] In addition, between 1763 and 1815 at least 23,000 Highland and Lowland Scots emigrated to the thirteen colonies.[10] The influence of Scots immigrants in America is a subject which has been extensively covered both as a subject in its own right,[11] and as part of wider investigations into American culture and the

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8 Daniels, R. Coming to America - A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life. New York, 1990, p. 68.

9 Fischer, D.H. Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America. Oxford, 1989, p. 609.

10 Bumsted, The People's Clearance, p. 229.

11 See, for example: Haws, C.H. Scots in the Old Dominion, 1685-1800. Edinburgh, 1980; Meyer, D. The Highland Scots of North Carolina, 1732-1776. Chapel Hill, 1961; Aspinwall, B. 'The Scots in the United States'. In The Scots Abroad - Labour, Capital, Enterprise, 1750-1914, pp. 80-110. Edited by R.A. Cage. London, 1985.

influence of immigrant groups upon that culture.[12] These works examined the influence of the Scots upon Southern culture, although their authors could occasionally be too ready to classify the Scots along with the 'Scotch-Irish', who were actually Ulster Presbyterians with Scottish backgrounds.[13] This tendency led to the exaggeration of the levels of Scottish immigration. The Southern states of America have been examined most in this respect, mainly because Scots tended to gravitate towards the states of North and South Carolina, Georgia and Virginia. North Carolina was the favoured destination of Scots, especially those from the Highlands, perhaps because there were fewer English settlers there than in Virginia and Georgia.[14] There is a relative scarcity of literature written on Scotland's influence on Northern culture and society, save for a few exceptions. [15] Even though the population of Scots in the North was smaller than in the South, it still made a considerable impact.

The Influence of Scottish Immigrants on the American Colonies

The influence of Scottish settlers upon America has been covered extensively by historians, and has shown that Scots had a major impact upon the development of the American nation, through involvement in political and constitutional affairs, influence

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[12] See, for example: Lefler, H.T. & Powell, W.S. Colonial North Carolina - A History. New York, 1973; Billings, W.M., Selby, J.E., & Tate, T.W. Colonial Virginia - A History. New York, 1986; Callaway, J.E. The Early Settlement of Georgia. Athens, 1948; Wallace, D.D. South Carolina - A Short History, 1520-1948. Chapel Hill, 1951; Wertenbaker, T.J. The Old South: The Founding of American Civilisation. New York, 1963; Wyatt-Brown, B. Southern Honour: Ethics and Behaviour in the Old South. Oxford, 1982; Eaton, C. The Growth of Southern Civilisation, 1790-1860. London, 1961; Owsley, F.L. Plain Folk of the Old South. Louisiana, 1949; Osterweis, R.G. Romanticism and Nationalism in the Old South. New Haven, 1949.

[13] Callaway, Georgia, p. 70; Hook, Scotland and America, p. 11.

[14] Lynch, M. Scotland - A New History. London, 1992, p. 373; Meyer, Highland Scots, p. 3; Davis, R.B. Intellectual Life in the Colonial South, 1585-1763. 3 vols, Knoxville, 1978, Vol.3, p. 1536; Craven, W.F. The Southern Colonies in the Seventeenth Century, 1607-1689. Baton Rouge, 1949, p. 315; Abbot, W.W. The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754-1775. Chapel Hill, 1959, p. 19.

[15] Some relevant texts include Pomfret, J.E. Colonial New Jersey: A History. New York, 1973; Kammen, M. Colonial New York: A History. New York, 1975; Landsman, N.C. Scotland and Its First American Colony, 1683-1765. Princeton, 1985.

over university and school education, and in church matters.[16] In addition, Scots played a significant role in business matters, publishing and journalism, and medicine, amongst many other important aspects of American life. The influence of Scottish settlers was most pronounced in North Carolina, which was the favoured destination of Highland Scots. Their influence can be isolated because of their unwillingness to integrate with other communities. Most Highlanders, having an agricultural background, became farmers on the fertile lands of North Carolina, with the most common farming practices being lumber production and cattle rearing.[17] In business matters, Scottish merchants excelled in North Carolina and exceeded the efforts of the English merchants in the development of backcountry trade.[18] Macdonald provided the most recent analysis of Scottish influences in North Carolina, and described the transplantation of many aspects of Scottish culture there.[19]

In the other Southern colonies of Georgia, South Carolina, and Virginia, the Scottish settlers also made a significant impact. In Georgia, Scots excelled in the military field, especially during the Spanish War,[20] and the Highland Scots also made an impact upon religious affairs: denied a minister by the Oglethorpe trustees, they set up the first Presbyterian church at Darien, which allowed blacks and whites to worship together.[21]

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16 Wertenbaker, T.J. Early Scotch Contributions to the United States. Glasgow, 1945; Black, G.F. Scotland's Mark on America. New York, 1921; Aspinwall, 'Scots in the United States'; Berthoff, R.T. British Immigrants in Industrial America, 1790-1950. Cambridge, 1953; Devine, T.M. 'Introduction: The Paradox of Scottish Emigration', and Gray, M. 'The Course of Scottish Emigration, 1750-1914: Enduring Influences and Changing Circumstances'. In Scottish Emigration and Scottish Society, pp. 1-15 and 16-36. Edited by T.M. Devine. Edinburgh, 1992.

17 Merrens, H.R. Colonial North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century. Chapel Hill, 1964, p. 100, p. 139.

18 Merrens, Colonial North Carolina, p. 164.

19 MacDonald, J.R. 'Cultural Retention and Adaptation among the Highland Scots of Carolina', Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1993.

20 Abbot, The Royal Governors, p.19; Coleman, K. Colonial Georgia - A History. New York, 1976, p. 66.

21 Smith, J.F. Slavery and Rice Culture in Low Country Georgia 1750-1860. Knoxville, 1985, p. 156.

Allied to this was the strong Scottish opposition to slavery in Georgia, although generally, Scots were as likely to own slaves as any other immigrant group. In South Carolina, the Scots had a greater impact than in Georgia. While they suffered much prejudice at the hands of the English settlers in the colony,[22] there were many influential Scottish individuals in the realms of business, such as Robert Wells and John Stuart; and in medicine, such as James Fraser and Alexander Garden.[23] In the area of administration, factionalism existed between Anglicans and Presbyterians, and between the English and the Scots.[24] The most important part which the Scottish settlers played in Virginia was an economic one, where they cornered more than half of the Chesapeake tobacco market, and became experts at coping with the increasing production of the Piedmont area, even when they were a distance away from the rivers of the Tidewater.[25] The Scottish merchants were not popular, refusing to assimilate with the rest of the population, so they remained outsiders. To further contribute to their unpopularity, the merchants sided with the Loyalists during the Revolution, a fact which long angered the patriots in the colonies. In addition to their economic impact in Virginia, the Scots also made contributions to the area of medicine, where Edinburgh-trained doctors brought their skills to the colony at a time when they were badly needed. They also exerted influence over educational matters, through the establishment of institutions such as the College of William and Mary; and in politics, in the roles of Governor and Lieutenant-Governor, and through the economic pressure which Scottish merchants put on the Assembly during the 1770s.[26]

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[22] Weir, R.M. Colonial South Carolina - A History. New York, 1983, p. 211.

[23] Lambert, R.S. South Carolina Loyalists in the American Revolution. Columbia, 1987, p.27.

[24] Davis, Intellectual Life, Vol. 3, p. 1537.

[25] Selby, J.E. The Revolution in Virginia 1755-1783. Williamsburg, 1988, p. 27.

[26] Haws, Scots, pp. 112-13.

Emigration to northern colonial America was mainly English, but there were substantial numbers of Scots, Irish, and Germans, as well as smaller numbers of Dutch, French and Swedish settlers. In 1790 the English made up 60 per cent of the population, the Germans 7.2 per cent, the Scots 6.4 per cent, the Ulster-Irish 5 per cent, and the Irish 3 per cent. By 1820, 600,000 emigrants had travelled to America: a tide including 350,000 English, 60,000 Irish, 50,000 German and 50,000 Scots.[27] Scottish emigration to the Northern colonies, while amounting to only a tenth of the English settlement, was nonetheless substantial and, at the very least, on a par with other European emigrant groups. Of all the Northern colonies, however, it was in New Jersey that the influence of the Scots population was most significant. The Scots in this colony did not make up a large proportion of the total population, but they exerted an influence which was widely disproportionate to their numbers. This colony therefore provides a very useful Northern comparison with the settlement of Scots in North Carolina.[28]

New Jersey offers us an insight into the factors which influenced the Scottish emigrant's choice of destination. Firstly, the colony was a refuge for Quaker dissenters; secondly, the many Scottish residents in East Jersey would have certainly provided an impetus for further Scots to arrive there; and thirdly, there were many similarities between South-West Scotland and East New Jersey. Both areas were predominantly Presbyterian, and land ownership was divided between large and small owners, owner-occupiers and tenants. In addition, there were economic similarities between the two areas. Landsman claimed that the conditions of New Jersey life were similar to those of the Border regions of Scotland, due to their cultural heterogeneity and the competing Scottish and English interests. These factors, he argued, led to a strengthening of national identity, "which was reflected in their development of unified ethnic settlements, their adoption of common Scottish social practices, and their attachment to a consolidated and

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[27] Daniels, Coming to America, pp. 67-8.

[28] Landsman, Scotland and its First American Colony, p. 103.

staunchly Presbyterian religious identity."[29] Scots also maintained a sense of community by establishing connections with other Scots throughout the colony. The Scots in New Jersey therefore represented an important influence. Despite their small numbers, they held important political positions and duplicated much that existed in Scottish life in the new colony, helped by the similarities between East Jersey and Scotland.

The tide of Scottish emigration to America caused much consternation amongst those who feared the effect which domestic knowledge of American political institutions could have on Scotland. Flinn described how, in the 1770s, establishment figures believed that too much exposure to America would lead to "the threat of contamination by American democratic and republic ideas."[30] The Lord Justice Clerk from Edinburgh, for example, wrote to Lord Suffolk, the Secretary to the Northern Department, in 1775, stating his fear "that the minds of these unhappy people may be corrupted with American principles before they leave this country."[31] The influence of American democracy upon Scotland has not been examined in as much detail as the effect on Britain as a whole,[32] but this influence is of great importance to our study of the effect of the American Civil War on Scotland, and will therefore be examined in detail in this thesis. The second consequence of the great tide of Scottish emigration to America was that many Scots had links with North America. It was inevitable, therefore, that a great deal of interest would be fostered between the two countries, as Scots looked west to the experience of their friends and family in the United States, and began to see the influence which the American political and social system was beginning to have on Great Britain.

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[29] Landsman, Scotland and Its First American Colony, p. 257.

[30] Flinn, M.W. et al. Scottish Population History from the 17th Century to the 1930s. Cambridge, 1977, p. 92.

[31] Flinn, Scottish Population History, p. 92.

[32] Lillibridge, Beacon of Freedom; Crook, D.P. American Democracy in English Politics, 1815-1850. Oxford, 1965.

The Scottish Enlightenment was one of the most important periods in the Scottish-American relationship. The Enlightenment was, on the one hand, inward-looking, including those such as Robert Fergusson and Robert Burns; while the other school was 'internationalist' in outlook, seeking to widen economic, intellectual and cultural horizons, and centred on the views of the 'North Britons', such as Adam Smith and David Hume. This international school of thought contributed to the early interest which Scotland showed in America. The relationship was established via the trade links between Glasgow and the Chesapeake Bay. The Glasgow ships sailing from the Clyde brought news, mail and ideas to Virginia, and the trading link stimulated Scottish interest in America. This commerce led to an increase in Scottish emigration to America, and a sharpening of Scottish awareness of America in the 18th century.[33]

During the Revolutionary War, the Scots in the Colonies were, on the whole, loyal to the Crown, a fact which made them very unpopular in the colonies. In Scotland, however, many of the North Britons, including Hume, Smith, and Kames, were sympathetic to the American revolutionists. The Revolution was a temporary check on cultural exchanges, but afterwards, Scottish influences slowly began to regain their strength. The period between 1800 and 1830 was not a good time for British-American relationships, however, with the outbreak of war in 1812. The Edinburgh Review and Blackwood's Magazine were important media in the exchange of views at this time, having very different political views, and both being very popular in America. Hook described how the reputation of the Edinburgh Review "did much to confirm and maintain the position of intellectual eminence gained initially for Scotland by the North Britons of the previous century."[34]

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33 For specific information on Glasgow's relationship with America, see Aspinwall, B. Portable Utopia: Glasgow and the United States, 1820-1920. Aberdeen, 1984.

34 Hook, Scotland and America, p. 110.

The influence of Scottish literature also made an important cultural impact on America, although it is easy when concentrating upon the impact of the Scottish author in America to get sidelined into the impact of Sir Walter Scott, whose influence was considerable throughout the country. It is well documented that Scott was very popular in the Southern States where gentlemen attempted to emulate the characters in Scott's novels, and Southerners used Scott's vision of the perfect gallant and chivalrous society as a defence against those who criticised Southern society.[35] Scott also had an influence in the North, however, where readers attached themselves to his ideas of nationalism. Northerners began, however, to increasingly prefer the writings of Thomas Carlyle and the Englishman Charles Dickens, who fitted in more easily with their desire for social reform.[36] It was argued by Osterweis that, whereas ideas specifically concerned with social reform gained prominence in the North, in the South an 'intellectual blockade' was erected which only accepted those ideas which were consistent with Southern ideals.[37]

The United States also served as a frame of intellectual reference in Scotland itself during the nineteenth century, with the extent of the interest in America demonstrated by the fact that between 1832 and 1861 Blackwood's published 57 articles on the subject of America, whilst the Edinburgh Review published 35 articles. In addition, many articles on other subjects provided regular comment on the United States. In the Conservative Blackwood's Magazine the articles included fiction,[38] literary criticism,[39] and most interesting of all, description and criticism of American democratic institutions. Following the 1832 Reform Act, Blackwood's commented in 1833 that "the tendency of

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[35] See, for example, Eaton, C. The Mind of the Old South. Baton Rouge, 1969, p. 248; Osterweis, Romanticism, p. 43.

[36] Osterweis, Romanticism, p. 55.

[37] Osterweis, Romanticism, p. 22-3.

[38] See, for example, 'A Night on the Banks of the Tennessee' Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine (hereafter BEM) 56 (Sept 1844), 278-88.

[39] See, for example, 'American Poetry' BEM 31 (Apr 1832), 646-664; 'The Periodical Literature of America' BEM 63 (Jan 1848), 106-12.

American institutions can never be sufficiently the subject of study to our people, because it is to a similar government that we are evidently tending."[40] Clearly this represented Tory concern at the emerging democracy in Britain. In 1846, the magazine also observed that with increased communication between America and Europe, "it cannot, we think, be said with truth, that those of the United States have risen in favour with the enlightened minds of Europe, least of all with those of England."[41] The Liberal Edinburgh Review also published a wide range of articles on America, including descriptions of its democratic institutions,[42] American literature,[43] and also the ways in which Britain could learn from the American experience of such things as railways and universal education.[44] On a local level in Scotland, there was also a strong interest in American literature. The Dumfries and Maxwelltown Mechanics' Institution, for example, was home to a lending library which housed a large number of books on America. These ranged from history books, such as Bancroft's History of America to books on slavery, such as Graham's American Slavery, Brown's Slave Life in Georgia and Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin.[45] While Hook described how Scottish culture continued to have an impact upon America between the 1830s and 1860, this summary of the Scottish interest in American culture amongst Scottish literary journals in the mid-nineteenth century illustrates what is not apparent from Hook's work, that a definite cultural exchange was in place throughout the nineteenth century which linked the two countries through a mutual interest. This thesis will show how a consistent interest was taken in American affairs and culture by Scottish commentators in the mid-nineteenth century, illustrating the enduring cultural connection between the two countries.

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40 'America' BEM 34 (Sept 1833), 285-308, p. 308.

41 'How they Manage Matters in "the Model Republic"' BEM 59 (Apr 1846), 439-49, p. 439.

42 'Democracy in America' The Edinburgh Review (hereafter The ER) 82 (1840-1), 1-47.

43 'Selections from the American Poets' The ER 61 (1835), 21-39.

44 'Improvements in Inland Transport - Railroads' The ER 60 (1834-5), 94-124 ; 'Railways at Home and Abroad' The ER 84 (Oct 1846), 479-530 ; 'Popular Education in the United States' The ER 98 (July 1853), 169-90.

45 Catalogue of Books belonging to the Dumfries and Maxwelltown Mechanics' Institution, Dumfries, 1858 and 1867.

It is evident that Scotland and America exhibited aspects of a shared experience from the eighteenth century, encompassing blood ties formed as a result of the waves of Scottish emigration to America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; and intellectual links which continued well into the nineteenth century and beyond. The consequence of these links is that many Scots in the nineteenth century had connections with America, a fact that strengthened and reinforced the intellectual and cultural interest shown in the United States. It will be shown that in the mid-nineteenth century there was a constant fascination with American institutions, with both opponents and supporters of political reform using the American experience to substantiate their arguments. The American Civil War also aroused these sentiments, and the Scottish reaction to it illustrated the perpetual interest of Scotland in the American republic.

American Influences on Scottish Perceptions of Democracy, 1832-68

In previous treatments of Scottish-American history there is a notable absence of literature covering the period between the 1830s and the start of the Civil War in 1861. Hook examined the period between 1750 and 1835, covering the Revolutionary period, while Botsford and Finnie covered the Civil War and Reconstruction periods respectively. The antebellum period provides us with very fertile ground for research, as it encompasses the Nullification Crisis of 1832-33, the period of Jacksonian democracy in the 1830s, the American expansionism of the 1840s, and the growing secession movement of the 1850s.[46] Of particular interest to us is the way in which Scottish opinion was influenced by the American democratic experience in the nineteenth century. The seminal work on this subject, in the British context, was provided by Lillibridge, who described the unique perspective which the United States offered to British Radicals and Conservatives

[46] Freehling, W.W. The Road to Disunion: Secessionists at Bay, 1776-1854. vol.1, Oxford, 1990; Freehling, W.W. Prelude to Civil War: The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina, 1816-1836. New York, 1968.

alike.[47] An analysis of this period of the nineteenth century is vital because it helps to explain the origins of Scottish attitudes towards the American Civil War. It will also be shown that Scottish interest in American affairs did not end following the main tide of emigration between 1760 and 1820 and suddenly begin again when the Confederates fired upon Fort Sumter in April 1861. The intervening period was an exciting one in the United States, and one which Scottish commentators were eager to comment on, both for its own sake and because of the increasing awareness that where America led Britain was likely to follow. The American Civil War was the climax of this period, and Scottish opinion also reached its climax following a century of avid fascination with the burgeoning American republic.

Two main themes characterised Scottish events in the mid-nineteenth century: calls for democratic reform and a demand for de-centralised decision making. With regard to the first, the 1832 Reform Act was an important piece of legislation which promised much, but delivered less than was desired and expected. The main achievement of the Act was that it ensured that the debate about greater enfranchisement remained a prominent one throughout the nineteenth century. The second major political theme of the century, de-centralisation, was manifested through the *laissez-faire* movement, the campaigns of the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights, and the establishment of the Free Church of Scotland.[48] This trend ran parallel with calls for democratic reform, indicating that the populace had grown tired of passively accepting decisions taken by an unaccountable and geographically remote government. The Scottish people were therefore ready to hear about the experience of democracy elsewhere, and it

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[47] Lillibridge, Beacon of Freedom; see also, Thistlethwaite, Anglo-American Connection, pp. 39-75.

[48] See Taylor, A.J. Laissez-faire and State Intervention in Nineteenth-century Britain. London, 1972; Hanham, H.J. 'Mid-Century Scottish Nationalism : Romantic and Radical' in Robson, R. Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain, pp. 143-79. London, 1967; Morton, Unionist Nationalism, pp.133-154; Brown, S.J. & Fry, M. (eds.) Scotland in the Age of Disruption. Edinburgh, 1993.

was here that the American republic served to satisfy this appetite, and to demonstrate not only the workings of a democracy, but also the problems inherent in balancing the powers of central and local governments. The United States provided Scottish commentators with a frame of reference by which to debate issues such as democracy, federalism and the power of the state, at a time when these issues were of growing importance at home. When political reform and growing governmental centralisation were causing significant concern amongst Scottish people, the example of American democracy and the stirring debate in the United States about the role of the federal government and that of the individual states were of deep relevance, and Scottish commentators were quick to make comment upon the events in America. The interest which was shown in American affairs during this period illustrates the continuing fascination that Scotland had with the United States, which was heading for its climax during the American Civil War. Almost every important American development was reported and examined in the Scottish press, while political issues at home were often debated with reference to the United States and its experience. During this period, therefore, the two countries had a shared experience of many nineteenth century developments, but Scotland, in particular, was willing to learn much from the American experience of democracy, less than a century after America had itself gained much from Scotland's social and intellectual culture, following the great tide of immigration which we have already described.

Attitudes towards democratic reform also proved to be influential in the determination of Civil War opinions. Those who supported political reform pointed to America as a land of democratic freedom, and tended to support the North during the War. Conservatives and Palmerstonian Liberals, who were wary of political reform, were critical of American democracy, and supported the South during the War.[49] This thesis

[49] See Botsford, 'Civil War', vol. 2, pp. 592-619; Lillibridge, Beacon of Freedom, pp. 111-13.

will further develop this theme, and illustrate how, on a local level too, democratic arguments proved decisive in the formulation of Civil War attitudes.[50] Debate has also taken place about the extent to which the American Civil War influenced democratic developments in the post-war environment. The overwhelming Liberal victory in the General Election of 1865, in which the party won 42 out of the 53 Scottish seats, has been described as a consequence of the Northern victory in the Civil War.[51] On balance, it is reasonable to argue, as Winter has, that the reform question was a primary issue during the election campaign,[52] and the Northern victory will consequently have benefited the reformists' campaign. Debate has also taken place about the influence of the Northern victory upon the passing of the 1867 Reform Act (passed in 1868 in Scotland), which enfranchised the urban working-classes.[53] A number of factors contributed to the passing of this Act, however, with party political wranglings paramount. The Northern victory in the American Civil War benefited the cause of reform, no doubt, but it would not have independently brought about reform had the political circumstances not been expedient.[54]

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[50] The importance of democracy to the Civil War debate, in the local setting, is discussed by Augar, 'Cotton Famine', p. 338, p. 347, p. 357; and Wright, D.G. 'Bradford and the American Civil War', Journal of British Studies 8 (1969), 69-85, pp. 73-4, 84, and 'Leeds Politics and the American Civil War', Northern History 9 (1974), 96-122, pp. 97-8, 120.

[51] Botsford, 'Civil War', vol. 2, p. 849; Finnie, 'Reconstruction', vol. 1, p. 293.

[52] Winter, J. 'The Cave of Adullam and Parliamentary Reform', The English Historical Review 81 (January 1966), pp. 38-55, p. 39.

[53] Lillibridge, Beacon of Freedom, pp. 121-2; Harrison, R. Before the Socialists: Studies in Labour and Politics, 1861-1881. London, 1965, pp. 67-8; Allen, 'Civil War', p. 82, p. 96; Botsford, 'Civil War', vol. 2, pp. 859-64.

[54] For more discussion about the passing of the 1867 Reform Act, see Smith, F.B. The Making of the Second Reform Bill. Cambridge, 1966; Herrick, F.H. 'The Reform Bill of 1867 and the British Party System', Pacific Historical Review 3 (1934), 216-33; Winter, 'The Cave of Adullam'.

A considerable amount of attention has been paid to the international impact of the American Civil War,[55] and there has also been a considerable amount of work done on the impact of the War on Britain, especially concerning diplomatic and political reactions to the War.[56] From the 1960s, historians began to examine the British impact of the American Civil War from a local perspective, which led to a more detailed analysis of the effect of the Civil War upon the British economy, and a greater awareness of local attitudes to the War.[57] The seminal work on the impact of the American Civil War upon Scotland was provided by Botsford, with further work carried out in this area by Finnie and Szasz, with the latter stressing that "the English, British and Scottish views of Abraham Lincoln and the American Civil War are by no means identical."[58] Botsford took a wide ranging approach to the subject, using the abundant Scottish press to examine Scottish reactions towards the Civil War. He focused upon Scottish attitudes towards the events leading up to the War, the effect that the war had upon the Scottish economy, and discussed the wide range of opinions which were held by political parties, religious groups, and the different social classes.

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55 Hyman, H. (ed.) Heard Round the World: the Impact Abroad of the Civil War. New York, 1969; Jordan, D. and Pratt, E. Europe and the American Civil War. New York, 1931; Crook, D.P. The North, the South, and the Powers 1861-1865. New York, 1974; Owsley, F.L. King Cotton Diplomacy: Foreign Relations of the Confederate States of America. Illinois, 1931; Callaghan, J.M. The Diplomatic History of the Southern Confederacy. Baltimore, 1901.

56 Adams, Civil War; Beloff, M. 'Great Britain and the American Civil War,' History 37 (1952), pp. 40-48; Hernon, J.M. 'British Sympathies in the American Civil War: A Reconsideration,' The Journal of Southern History, 1967, pp. 356-67; Good, T.S. 'The British Parliament and the American Civil War.' MA Thesis, Durham University, 1993; Whitridge, A. 'British Liberals and the American Civil War', History Today 12 (October 1962), 688-95; Bellows, D. 'A Study of British Conservative Reaction to the American Civil War.' The Journal of Southern History 51 (Nov 1985), 505-26.

57 Ellison, Support for Secession; Henderson, W.O. The Lancashire Cotton Famine, 1861-65. 2nd ed. Manchester, 1969; Greeves, 'Civil War'; Augar, 'Cotton Famine'; Wright, 'Bradford and the Civil War', 'Leeds and the Civil War'.

58 Botsford,'Civil War'; Finnie, 'Reconstruction'; Szasz, F.M. 'Scotland, Abraham Lincoln, and the American Civil War,' Northern Scotland 16 (1996), pp. 127-40, p. 127.

This historiography illustrates changing trends in, and uses of, British reactions to the American Civil War. In the early part of the twentieth century the situation was greatly oversimplified, with authors such as Adams, and Jordan and Pratt, claiming that sentiment in Britain was broadly split between the upper classes who supported the Confederacy, and the working classes who supported the Union. It was also the trend at this time to argue that the American Civil War directly led to democratic reform in Britain. Revision of these traditional views took place in the 1950s and 1960s, with the lead taken by Hernon.[59] The new school of thought argued that Britain's stance during the war was based on economic and political expediency, rather than grand principles.[60] In addition, it argued that sympathy for the South did not only come from the upper classes, as much Confederate support was linked to a belief in the self-determination of peoples, and this was a sentiment which cut across all social classes.[61] Upper-class sympathy for the South was based on a dislike of democracy rather than fondness for slavery.[62] Botsford echoed these revisions: he stated that Radicals and the working classes generally supported the North, while Tories and aristocrats favoured the South. He recognised the exceptions that existed, however, such as liberal and labour elements that supported the South on the grounds of self-determination, and aristocrats, such as the Duke of Argyll, who supported the North.[63] The Duke's support for the North originated in his belief in the permanence of nationhood: "there are some things worth fighting for, and ... national existence is one of them."[64] The modern interpretation of events, from the 1970s to the present day has revised further some of these theories. Ellison, for example,

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59 Hernon, 'British Sympathies', pp. 356-67.

60 Merli, F.G. and Green, T.W. 'Great Britain and the Confederate Navy, 1861-1865', History Today 14 (Oct 64) quoted by Hernon, 'British Sympathies', p. 357.

61 Hernon, 'British Sympathies', pp. 361-3; Whitridge, 'British Liberals', pp. 689-91.

62 Hernon, 'British Sympathies', p. 359.

63 Botsford, 'Civil War', vol. 2, p. 868.

64 Campbell, George Douglas, eighth Duke of Argyll (1823-1900). In The Dictionary of National Biography, Volume XXII Supplement, pp. 385-91. By Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee, Oxford, 1901, p. 387.

disputed the theory that manufacturing towns crippled by the Cotton Famine overwhelmingly supported the North because of their loathing of slavery and their support for democracy. She claimed that virtually all the cotton towns wanted British recognition of the South, with the only exception being Rochdale, due to its connection with John Bright and Richard Cobden, the two most vociferous supporters of the North in the House of Commons.[65] Augar rejected Ellison's thesis, however, and argued that the Lancashire towns were, in fact, Northern sympathisers after all. Their support was, he argued, a result of a multitude of factors which went beyond simple economic considerations.[66] McPherson also accused Ellison of 'overcorrection', arguing that cotton was only one of a number of textiles produced in Britain, and the operatives of materials such as wool and flax were actually benefiting from the War.[67] A great many working class people were therefore able to follow their conscience, and many did favour the North because of its democratic credentials.[68] McPherson also described the tendency of the British aristocracy to support the Union because of their dislike of democracy, but he argued against over-simplification because of the tendency of some aristocrats such as the Duke of Argyll to support the North, and some radicals' support for Southern self-determination. McPherson suggested that slavery prevented strong polarisation of opinions in Britain. While it was difficult to overwhelmingly support the South because of its 'peculiar institution,' the North's reluctance to embrace the abolitionist cause meant that opponents of slavery had no particular sympathy with either side in the conflict. The debate illustrates that it is now accepted that attitudes in Britain towards the American Civil War are not straightforward, and cannot be polarised easily.

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65 Ellison, Support for Secession, pp. 40-2, 98-100.

66 Augar, 'Cotton Famine'.

67 McPherson, J.M. Battle Cry of Freedom: The American Civil War. London, 1988, pp. 552-3.

68 See, for example, Wright, 'Bradford and the Civil War' and 'Leeds and the Civil War'.

The Civil War, which centred on the struggle for Southern independence, did not arouse similar sentiments in Scotland, because nationalism was not a powerful force in Scotland at this time.[69] This point was made by Finnie, who pointed out that the Scottish cause was used to promote Confederate independence rather than the other way round.[70] Both Hanham and Hook described how the first half of the nineteenth century saw an emphasis on Scottish national identity which focused on the romantic images portrayed by the likes of Scott and Burns.[71] This was in contrast to the images of the eighteenth century which promoted Scotland as a cultural centre of the European enlightenment and looked down upon superstition and romanticism. Hanham pointed out that by the 1850s, Scots had realised that the romantic vision was not the best foundation upon which to build a coherent nationalist movement, and instead the consequences of the union with Britain began to be considered.[72] On the face of things the Union was well supported and viewed as beneficial to Scotland, but eventually grievances began to arise over the treatment of Scottish issues, particularly at Westminster. As a result, both the Free Church and the 'Romantics' called for efforts to redress the imbalances present in the system. Most writers discussed the short-lived N.A.V.S.R., and the reasons for its failure, but rarely is the Scottish nationalist movement of this time set into a wider international context. Hanham came close, by examining national movements in Europe, particularly countries such as Ireland, Poland, Hungary, Bohemia and the Balkans which were calling for independence from an occupying power. He discussed Wales and Brittany as small nations trying to retain their own culture whilst being part of a larger country, and claimed that Scotland was trying to prove itself a cultural and political entity in its own right.

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69 Hutchison, I.G.C. A Political History of Scotland, 1832-1924: Parties, Elections and Issues. Edinburgh, 1986, p. 93; Ash, M. The Strange Death of Scottish History, Edinburgh, 1980, p. 146.

70 Finnie, 'Reconstruction', vol.1, p. 200.

71 Hanham, 'Scottish Nationalism', p. 144; Hook, Scotland and America, pp. 116-73.

72 Hanham, 'Scottish Nationalism', pp. 148-9.

The study of Scottish local history has hitherto been neglected, with a scarcity of modern academic studies of Scottish provincial towns. Most of the histories which do exist are contemporary accounts, with the obvious deficiencies associated with this essentially parochial and descriptive genre. Campbell, in his study of South-West Scotland, drew particular attention to the dearth of Scottish local histories. He described how there is an increasing number of local historians now contributing to knowledge about Scottish history, and that general historians ignore such work at their peril.[73] A particular deficiency is the lack of attention paid to local reactions to national and international events, even when these events had a direct effect upon local life. The influence of the American Civil War upon individual Scottish towns has also been generally neglected, and consequently so have local attitudes towards the War, save for a few exceptions.[74] The main treatments of Scotland and the American Civil War have also concentrated upon the large industrial areas of Scotland, such as Glasgow and Edinburgh.[75] Indeed, Botsford specifically called for more local research on the effects of the War, including such places as the Scottish Borders.[76] The importance of studying this topic from a local perspective was also alluded to by Szasz who described how "The long history of Scotland is replete with numerous internal clashes over region, social class, economics, politics, clan rivalries, and theology. These differences had by no means disappeared by the 1860s. Consequently, Scotland presented no single interpretation of Lincoln and the war."[77] This neglect of Scottish provincial towns has led to inaccurate references about their experiences during the Civil War. A good example of this is the

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73 Campbell, R.H. Owners and Occupiers: Changes in Rural Society in South-West Scotland before 1914. Aberdeen, 1991, pp. ix-xi.

74 Carrie, D.C. Dundee and the American Civil War, 1861-65. Abertay Historical Society, 1953; and Ranson, E. The Mad Hatter of Aberdeen. Aberdeen, 1996, pp. 87-110.

75 Botsford, 'Civil War'; Finnie, 'Reconstruction'.

76 Botsford, 'Civil War', vol.1, p. 449 ; vol. 2, p. 872.

77 Szasz, 'Civil War', p.127.

account of Paisley newspaper support during the War provided by both Cowan and Botsford. Cowan described how "the [Renfrewshire] Independent, and apparently also the [Paisley] Herald took a creditably sympathetic view of the North's case in the American Civil War, despite the distress in local industry due to the blockade."[78] Botsford repeated this assertion, stating that "Both of the Paisley papers were giving whole-hearted support to Lincoln and his policies and were backing the popular movement in response to the Emancipation Proclamation."[79] Close examination of these two newspapers has proved these views to be incorrect. While the Renfrewshire Independent did show support for the North until Autumn 1861,[80] this support was far from consistent or "whole-hearted" for the rest of the War,[81] and the Paisley Herald was pro-Confederate for the duration of the War.[82]

One of the most important reasons for studying the effect of the American Civil War on different Scottish localities is that the effect of the War was not a uniform one. Firstly, the economic effects of the War upon Scotland were diverse: areas such as the West of Scotland suffered the effects of the Cotton Famine, while Glasgow benefited from shipbuilding contracts, Dundee prospered through the increased demand for its jute products, and the Borders woollen trade gained from the high price of cotton. In addition, it will be shown that the different political cultures of individual towns contributed to different opinions upon the War. Finally, the very fact that local identities were such an integral part of the American problems of the nineteenth century, means that we should be especially aware of the problem of regarding Scotland as one unit, rather than a collection of different towns and regions. The roots of sectionalism in America can be found in the

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78 Cowan, R.M.W. The Newspaper in Scotland: A Study of Its First Expansion, 1815-1860. Glasgow, 1946, p. 304.

79 Botsford, 'Civil War', vol. 2, pp. 684-5.

80 The Renfrewshire Independent and Paisley Weekly Journal, 11.5.61, 25.5.61, 22.6.61.

81 The Renfrewshire Independent, 8.2.62, 15.2.62, 14.6.62, 17.1.63, 28.2.63, 23.5.63.

82 The Paisley Herald and Renfrewshire Advertiser, 6.4.61, 6.7.61, 20.7.61, 7.12.61, 12.7.62, 11.10.62, 3.1.63, 3.10.63, 4.6.64.

question of local rights and identities; it is only right, therefore, that we recognise that different local identities were also present in Scotland, and were of importance in the formulation of their attitudes towards the troubles in America. It is the aim of this thesis to concentrate on three areas, which share both similarities and diversities. The first is the county of Dumfriesshire, a predominantly agricultural region with a small textile industry; the second is the town of Paisley, well-known for its cotton thread industry; and the third is the Borders region, especially the towns of Hawick and Galashiels, famed for their tweed production. The Borders is particularly interesting as the effect of the Civil War upon its woollen industry has been largely ignored, with the Yorkshire woollen industry portrayed as *the* British woollen industry.[83] One common thread connecting these three areas was a vibrant political culture, which was expressed throughout the nineteenth century, during the Chartist period of the 1830s and 1840s, and during the nationalist struggles in Europe in the 1850s and 1860s. It will be shown how important the study of local areas is, especially when examining the impact of an international event upon Scotland. Diverse local cultures meant that reactions to the Civil War were similarly diverse, and generalised treatments of Scotland elide much of this diversity.

Campbell described how the history of Dumfries and Galloway has been neglected hitherto, "so little is known of some of the special characteristics of the later nineteenth century."[84] The impact of the American Civil War on Dumfriesshire has therefore not been examined previously, perhaps because of the county's agricultural base and a mistaken belief that any effects would be minimal. The region provides a useful example, however, both in the contrast which it brings to the study of a town such as Paisley, but also in terms of the significant impact which the Civil War had upon the agricultural economy. The subject of agriculture in Dumfriesshire has been neglected by modern historians, as is the case with lowland Scottish agriculture as a whole. The most recent general survey of

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83 Greeves, 'Civil War '.

84 Campbell, Owners and Occupiers, p. xii.

Scottish agriculture was carried out by Symon in 1959,[85] with the only study of nineteenth century Dumfriesshire agriculture dating back to 1869.[86] While Symon did draw attention to the impact of the American Civil War upon agriculture in Britain as a whole, he did not go into much detail, and Dumfriesshire was not specifically mentioned.[87] The main historical account of the town of Dumfries was carried out by McDowall in 1867,[88] but no attention was given to the American Civil War. For a political perspective of the town of Dumfries, we can look to an article by Troup on Dumfries Chartism,[89] and texts covering the career of the burgh's Radical Member of Parliament during the Civil War, William Ewart.[90]

Paisley offers us a completely different perspective to that of Dumfriesshire, in that it was an industrial town with an extremely strong political heritage and a thriving cotton-thread industry, vulnerable to the effect of the Cotton Famine brought about by the American Civil War. There are a number of texts which cover the history of Paisley,[91] and little mention is made of the War in them, except by Clark who merely suggested that the cotton thread industry of Paisley was not permanently damaged by the conflict.[92] Blair provided a comprehensive treatment of the Paisley thread industry, examining its

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85 Symon, J.A. Scottish Farming Past and Present. Edinburgh, 1959.

86 Gillespie, J. 'Agriculture of Dumfriesshire', Transactions of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland. vol. II, Fourth Series, (1869), pp. 270-325; Newby Fraser, H. 'Agriculture of Dumfriesshire', Transactions, (1869), pp. 326-34.

87 Symon, Scottish Farming, p. 190.

88 McDowall, W. History of the Burgh of Dumfries: with notices of Nithsdale, Annandale and the Western Border. 4th ed. Dumfries, 1986.

89 Troup, C. 'Chartism in Dumfries, 1830-50', Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society, Third Series, 56 (1981), pp. 100-109.

90 Munford, W.A. William Ewart, MP, 1798-1869: Portrait of a Radical. London, 1960; Black, A. A New History of the English Public Library: Social and Intellectual Contexts, 1850-1914. London, 1996, pp. 79-89; Shirley, G.W. 'William Ewart, Pioneer of Public Libraries, a former Dumfries MP', paper read at the Conference of the Scottish Library Association at Dumfries, 21st May 1930.

91 Clark, S. Paisley: A History. Edinburgh, 1988; McCarthy, M. A Social Geography of Paisley. Paisley, 1969; Brown, R. The History of Paisley, from the Roman Period down to 1884. 2 vols, Paisley, 1886; Metcalfe, W.M. A History of Paisley, 600-1908. Paisley, 1909; Black, C.S. The Story of Paisley. Paisley, 1947.

92 See for example, Henderson, Cotton Famine, p. 131; Clark, Paisley, p. 132.

origins in the late eighteenth century, and its growth following the invention of the sewing machine in the 1850s.[93] His work also described the monopoly which the Southern States of America had on the importation of raw cotton, and commented non-specifically about the "difficulties" which had been caused in the past.[94] Of particular interest to us is the work done by Clarke and Dickson, who examine the political consensus which existed in nineteenth-century Paisley,[95] and Macdonald upon the radical identity of Paisley.[96] It will be shown in this thesis that Paisley's radical identity proved to be a major determinant of its Civil War attitudes.

The treatment of the history of the Borders is similarly void of discussion about the American Civil War and its effects on the area. Even the promisingly titled Hawick in the Early Sixties by the eminent Hawick historian James Edgar was bereft of mention of the War.[97] The only mention given to the Civil War is in Galashiels: A Modern History where a brief allusion was made to the beneficial effect the War had upon the Galashiels tweed trade.[98] The lack of writing on the effect of the American Civil War on the local areas of Scotland does not indicate that there was no effect, however. To the contrary, it will be shown that the Scottish regions outside Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Dundee, experienced not only the economic effects of the War, but also illustrated the extent to

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93 Blair, M. The Paisley Thread and the Men who Created and Developed It. Paisley, 1907.

94 Blair, Paisley Thread, p. 26.

95 Clarke, A. & Dickson, A. 'Class and Class Consciousness in Early Industrial Capitalism: Paisley 1770-1850'. In Capital and Class in Scotland, pp. 8-60. Edited by Anthony Dickson. Edinburgh, 1982; 'Social Concern and Social Control in Nineteenth Century Scotland: Paisley 1841-1843', Scottish Historical Review 65 (1986), 48-60.

96 Macdonald, C.M.M. 'The Radical Thread: Political Change in Scotland, Paisley Politics 1885-1924', Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Strathclyde, 1995; 'The Vanduaria of Ptolemy: Place and the Past'. In Image and Identity: The Making and Re-making of Scotland Through the Ages, pp. 177-94. Edited by Davit Broun, R.J. Finlay & Michael Lynch. Edinburgh, 1998; 'Locality, Tradition and Language in the Evolution of Scottish Unionism: A Case Study, Paisley 1886-1910'. In Unionist Scotland 1800-1997, pp. 52-72. Edited by Catriona M. M. Macdonald. Edinburgh, 1998.

97 Edgar, J. Hawick in the Early Sixties. Hawick, 1913.

98 Galashiels History Committee, Galashiels: A Modern History. Galashiels, 1983.

which the War on the other side of the Atlantic was affecting the minds of the inhabitants of towns such as Dumfries, Paisley, Hawick and Galashiels. It will be shown, too, that it was not merely economic circumstances that influenced opinions on the War, but that deeply rooted political and social views went much further in determining whether sympathy was bestowed upon North or South in the struggle. The examination of four Scottish towns in this respect will go far towards proving such an argument, as all four were home to distinct political cultures. This thesis will demonstrate the importance of localism in determining the factors which influenced Civil War attitudes. Distinctive local identities resulted in opinions which were unique, and the result of each locality's specific combination of social, industrial, and political characteristics. It will prove that the previous emphasis on economic factors was too simplistic and misleading.

The overwhelming reliance of this thesis upon the provincial newspapers of Dumfriesshire, Paisley, and the Scottish Borders contributes much more than a mere historical source material. The nineteenth century development of the British provincial newspaper in many ways parallels the political history of the nineteenth century, especially with regard to the development of urban political radicalism and the growth of the provinces as important centres of political and social activity. The provincial newspaper was the main facilitator of this political and regional development, and its role is therefore crucial to the themes which are examined in this thesis. A good deal of work has been carried out on the historical development of the newspaper, from a Scottish perspective, a British perspective and an American perspective.[99]

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[99] From a Scottish perspective: Cowan, The Newspaper in Scotland; Donaldson, W. Popular Literature in Victorian Scotland: language, fiction and the press. Aberdeen, 1986. From a British perspective: Lee, A.J. The Origins of the Popular Press in England 1855-1914. London, 1976; Jones, A. Powers of the Press: Newspapers, Power and the Public in Nineteenth-Century England. Aldershot, 1996. From an American perspective: Salmon, L.M. The Newspaper and the Historian. New York, 1923. For an examination of the impact of the press on the growth of the provinces, see Read, D. The English Province c. 1760-1960: A Study in Influence. London, 1964, pp. x, 45-6.

This introductory chapter has shown how the American Civil War marked the culmination of a relationship which Scotland had experienced with America throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Of particular importance in this relationship was the influence which the new American democracy had upon Scottish attitudes towards electoral reform. This influence was demonstrated during the agitation for reform in the 1830s and 1840s; in the formulation of Civil War attitudes; and during the 1865 General Election and the lead-up to the 1867 Reform Act. Previous work on the subject of Scotland and the American Civil War has illustrated that a multitude of factors influenced the formulation of opinions. Early historians argued that the determining factor was class or party affiliation, while later historians spoke of economic expediency as the primary influence. It is now accepted that a simplistic explanation is impossible, and that the reality was much more complex. This justifies the localised approach which will be taken in this thesis. In order to ascertain the importance of economic and political influences, the diversity which local provincial towns provide will help to clarify the major determinants at play.

Chapter 2: The Nullification Crisis in South Carolina, 1832-33

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The Nullification Crisis of 1832-33 has been chosen as the starting point of this study of the antebellum period in American history for a number of reasons. Firstly, it represented the first time that sectionalist feelings began to arise seriously in the Southern States of America and threaten the status of the Union. Secondly, the events of 1832 and 1833 in America and Scottish reactions to them illustrated the high level of Scottish interest in American issues from an early date. This was clearly due to the fascination in American issues per se, but also because of the implications which American events could have on Great Britain. Viewed by both advocates and opponents of democratic reform in Scotland as proof of their arguments, the American experiment in democracy was of crucial importance in the year that the journey towards universal suffrage began in Britain. Conservatives, in particular, viewed the Nullification Crisis with gleeful anticipation. It provided them with their first real opportunity to illustrate the failures of the American political system.[1] In addition, the issues of federalism and central-local government relations which the Nullification Crisis raised were relevant to the British nation, especially with regard to its government of Ireland at this time, as well as Scottish concerns about growing centralisation of government.

The Causes of the Nullification Crisis, 1827-32

The Nullification Crisis was the culmination of several years of sectional discontent in the American South, mainly over the issue of federal tariff policy. The protective tariffs, enacted in the 1820s, were intended to protect home manufacturing industries from cheaper foreign competition. Southerners complained that the resulting rise in the cost of living adversely affected them more than Northerners, who could at least sell their goods at home, unlike the cotton crop, which had a very limited domestic

[1] Lillibridge, Beacon of Freedom, pp. 108-110.

market. While problems of soil erosion and growing competition were partly to blame for the South's problems, their frustrations centred upon the federal tariff.[2] South Carolina's voice was the loudest in the South because, in addition to its specific economic problems, the issue of slavery continued to be a problem in this state where there were two black people to every white person. Many believed that the Missouri Compromise of 1820 had settled sectional disputes over slavery, but the issue arose again when the American Colonisation Society made a request for Congressional aid in 1827. South Carolinians felt threatened by the mere discussion of slavery in Congress, as they believed that the best way to live with slavery was to refuse to discuss it. Further controversy arose in 1827, when woollen manufacturers attempted to increase the tariff on wool imports to 50%, a proposal only shelved because of Vice-President, and South Carolinian, John C. Calhoun's casting vote. Finally, an 1827 convention at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania marked an attempt to organise the protectionist movement. As Freehling pointed out, "for the first time, thousands of Carolinians suspected that a majority - perhaps a permanent majority - of northerners were determined to exploit the southern minority."[3] Ironically, the aim of South Carolina's leaders was to ensure the preservation of the Union. Calhoun and his supporters feared that the tariff policy and the increasing slavery agitation would eventually break-up the Union, if not resolved.

The Tariff of 1828 further aroused South Carolinian distrust of the federal government. Duties were increased to 50 per cent and anti-tariff protesters argued, on the basis of legislative intent, that the Constitution allowed taxation for the purpose of raising revenue, but not for the purpose of protecting certain industries above others. The increased tariff also further angered South Carolina radicals who saw the Tariff as:

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2 Freehling, Prelude to Civil War, p. 47.

3 Freehling, Prelude to Civil War, p. 126.

> the final demonstration of the South's minority position in the nation. Northern economic groups had formed a permanent majority and had appointed the South paymaster of the system. Tariffs were designed to drain away Southern wealth and appropriations to fill Northern pockets ... only a minority check on majority tyranny could save the South - and the Union. [4]

The policy of nullification encompassed the right of a state to nullify a federal law, but did not necessarily involve a break-up of the Union. People such as Calhoun supported the nullification of the tariff because they believed that early resolution of the issue would save the Union, not destroy it. They also believed, however, that if nullification did not succeed in reducing the Tariff, or if it invited federal attack upon South Carolina, secession could be the only way forward.

The Climax of the Nullification Crisis, 1832-33

Two issues contributed to the climax of the Nullification Crisis in 1832: the 1832 Tariff and the intensifying slavery problem. The new tariff lowered the general rates of duties, but retained high protective rates on certain products. South Carolina maintained that there was no justification for such a high tariff, especially when the public debt was nearing repayment. Hostility to the new tariff was heightened, however, by two events in 1831: William Lloyd Garrison's publication of The Liberator, and the Nat Turner insurrection, in which fifty-seven whites were killed by slaves in Virginia. These events led to an increased vigour in the nullification campaign. Ostensibly, the Nullification Crisis was about the repeal of the 'obnoxious tariff.' In reality, the campaign was a way of fighting Northern Abolitionism without mentioning slavery. If a minority veto had been negotiated on the tariff question, this could have enabled South Carolina to veto any abolition bills which might have later arisen. Crucially, from the point of view of this study, the nullifiers recognised that a pro-slavery stand would not gain international support, but that a protest based upon issues such as free trade and states' rights would. It

[4] Freehling, Prelude to Civil War, p. 143.

is interesting to note the consistency of this attitude during the Civil War. The Confederacy promoted itself as a nation striving for independence on a free-trade ticket, knowing how this would appeal to overseas liberals much more than a defence of slavery.

The Nullification Ordinance which was due to come into effect on the 1st of February 1833, declared the Tariffs of 1828 and 1832 unconstitutional and null and void in South Carolina. While opposition to the Tariff was shared in other southern states, none would support nullification. The closest that South Carolina came to receiving the support of other states was after President Jackson's Nullification Proclamation of December 10th 1832, in which he condemned both nullification *and* secession. The other southern states believed that while a state did not have the constitutional right to nullify the laws of the Union, it did have the right to secede from the Union. Following Governor Hayne's proclamation on December 26th 1832, which called for volunteers to defend South Carolina, President Jackson formed civilian posses and the Force Bill was enacted, empowering the President to use the armed forces to collect customs duties in South Carolina. The date on which the Nullification Ordinance was due to come into effect was suspended by the nullifiers; Calhoun supported suspension on the grounds that if nullification failed, secession was undesirable. In his view, the aim of nullification was to avoid secession. On February 12th 1833, Senator Clay introduced a Compromise Tariff which was passed by the Senate on March 1st.

Ultimately, the nullifiers faced too many problems. The slave population was restless, opposition to their stand from within South Carolina was strong, and they lacked the necessary support of the other southern states. While the Compromise Tariff did not go as far as the nullifiers wanted, it still represented a considerable victory, given that President Jackson had considered the 1832 tariff settlement to be final. South Carolina could justifiably claim a qualified victory with regard to nullification. Most important, however, was the growing realisation that, whatever the victories of South Carolina in

this instance, the South was becoming more and more of a minority section within the United States. Through its geographical position, its hot and humid climate, and its concentration on the staple crops of cotton, tobacco, and sugar, the region was becoming increasingly detached from the rest of the nation. The plantation system necessary for the cultivation of these crops relied on slavery and it was here that the South was becoming more and more isolated. In the early years of the republic the South had been cut off from the other sections, and it was therefore convenient for the North to be indifferent to the South and its institutions. Improvements in transport and communications served to bring the sections of the country closer together, however, and the north began to question the existence of slavery. The political strength of the South was also waning by the middle of the century. This was a result of the falling number of immigrants to the southern states, who felt that Southern society offered them few opportunities. As a consequence, the population of the North began to grow at the expense of the South, therefore undermining the South's political strength. The Nullification Crisis represented the South's first attempt at breaking the North's power over their region. For the rest of the antebellum period, the issues raised during the Crisis continued to develop, leading eventually to the outbreak of Civil War.

The Issues Raised by Nullification

One of the most important issues which the Nullification Crisis highlighted was the importance of constitutional interpretation. Broad constructionists argued that the Constitution was flexible and could be adapted to new situations: for example, allowing Congress to allocate money for schemes which improved the 'general welfare' of the country. Strict constructionists, on the other hand, believed that Congress could only exercise those powers which were laid down in the Constitution, and these powers could not be 'stretched' to cover such things as internal improvement schemes. The vagueness of

such terms as 'the general welfare' contributed to the political schisms which arose. The Crisis also centred upon the operation and viability of federalism. Since the ratification of the Constitution, power had moved slowly away from the individual states and into the hands of the federal government. The Tenth Amendment of the United States Constitution laid down that the States delegate powers to the federal government and reserve some powers for themselves. Therefore, the States are the original source of federal authority. Problems arose because the powers reserved by the States were not defined, leading to controversy over policies such as internal improvements. Did internal improvements qualify as projects for the 'general welfare' and therefore belong in the realm of the federal government, or were they outwith the stated power of the federal government and therefore amongst the powers reserved by the States themselves?

The Nullification Crisis also raised the issue of majority rule and the right of minority veto. Traditionally seen as a tenet of democracy, majority rule was regarded as a qualified cornerstone of American politics. Qualified, because the Framers of the Constitution realised the dangers of unrestrained majority rule and imposed the system of checks and balances; and also because the South was permitted to count slaves as three-fifths of a free person to ensure 'fair' representation in the House of Representatives and the Electoral College. In addition, the South had demanded that in order for trade treaties to be ratified in the Senate, a two-thirds majority be required. Overall, however, majority rule was a strong component of American democracy and did not always remain unrestrained, as the nullifiers protested. Calhoun had previously been a supporter of majority rule, believing in the safeguard of elections. By the late 1820s, however, he had begun to worry about the experience of 'permanent minorities' such as the Southern states. He believed that "the exploitation of permanent minorities . . . inevitably followed from the rule of numerical majorities."[5] Instead, he argued in favour of a government of the

[5] Freehling, Prelude to Civil War, p. 155.

'concurrent majority', which involved the concept of minority veto: that is, a system whereby one state may veto any law to which it does not agree.

Scottish Reactions to the Nullification Crisis

To the Scottish observer of American developments, the Nullification Crisis would have seemed a brief affair, being resolved within five months. The coverage which the Scottish press afforded to the Crisis was also brief, but commentators delved deeply into the issues which the Crisis raised. In particular, the economic issues of free trade and protectionism were discussed, as well as the operation of federalism and majority rule. This investigation will concentrate upon the views expressed in Dumfriesshire and Paisley, although it will also touch upon the opinions of some of the Edinburgh and Glasgow newspapers, whose response to the Nullification Crisis has been hitherto neglected. In 1833, Dumfries was home to two newspapers: the Dumfries Times and the Dumfries and Galloway Courier. The Times was Radical in outlook, supporting national education, free trade, and later, the Complete Suffrage movement. The Courier was more moderate, and had a large circulation, exceeded only in Scotland by the Aberdeen Journal and the Aberdeen Herald.[6] Paisley also possessed two newspapers: the Paisley Advertiser and the Glasgow (Saturday) Evening Post and Paisley and Renfrewshire Reformer. The Advertiser was a Conservative paper, which was vociferously challenged by the Radical Evening Post. It will become immediately apparent that more attention was paid to the Nullification Crisis in the Dumfries newspapers than those in Paisley. The Dumfries Times devoted most original comment to the Crisis, supporting the right of South Carolina to nullify the tariff, as a consequence of it being a minority suffering the oppression of an unjust law. The Courier, on the other hand, devoted more space to the Crisis, although much of its comment was taken from the

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[6] Cowan, The Newspaper in Scotland, p. 162.

Scotsman and the Edinburgh Evening Courant. In Paisley, while both the newspapers offered relatively little space to the Crisis, both were resolute in their opinions as to the events on the other side of the Atlantic.

The Newspaper Reaction to South Carolina's Opposition to Federal Law

The Dumfriesshire press overwhelmingly supported South Carolina's opposition to the federal Tariff. Both newspapers argued that South Carolina was suffering at the hands of selfish Northern manufacturers, who had only material self-interest in mind. The Courier, taking its lead from the Scotsman, emphasised that the Southern States did not have a manufacturing base and relied heavily upon imported goods. The paper denied that South Carolina was acting recklessly in threatening to nullify the Tariff because the State had found that "remonstrances to the federal legislature are fruitless."[7] South Carolina's actions were judged a final attempt to secure just and fair treatment. The Dumfries Times also argued that the North was being selfish, and maintained that it was only the "sturdy determination of the men of Carolina"[8] which could achieve a reduction of the Tariff. The Times vehemently opposed the resulting injustices inherent in the operation of the Tariff, claiming that:

> the only consequence of the [tariff] act would be to levy a heavy tax on the whole union, in order to profit the northern part of it ... The Northern States received all the benefit of the tariff, while they felt very few of its evils; the Southern States suffered all its evils, without participating in any of its benefits.[9]

Sympathy was clearly expressed for South Carolina on the grounds that the North was treating it unfairly. The fact that South Carolina had tried other channels to redress its grievances was seized upon as evidence that they had no other alternative but

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[7] The Dumfries Courier, 8.1.33; the Scotsman, 5.1.33.

[8] The Dumfries Times, 10.1.33.

[9] The Dumfries Times, 17.1.33.

to oppose federal law. It must be remembered, however, that there was strong opposition in Britain towards the protectionist policies of the United States, and the British Corn Laws, and the Dumfries Times was strongly committed to free trade principles. The Glasgow Evening Post, based in Paisley, also seized upon the Nullification Crisis as a means of advocating Corn Law repeal: "General Jackson announces the gradual repeal of the Tariff; and if he [does] not prevail upon the manufacturing nations of Europe to establish free trade in corn, and fairly exchange their goods for agricultural produce, the nascent manufactures of America will be extinguished." As a result, argued the Evening Post, the North would have to adopt slavery in order to be able to compete.[10] This illustrated the perpetual tendency of commentators to report international events with a close eye on domestic politics. In this case, the issue of Corn Law repeal clearly influenced comment upon South Carolina's stand.

Scottish Attitudes towards American Federalism

With regard to the right of South Carolina to secede from the federal Union, the Dumfries Courier was adamant that the state had a greater right to secede than the thirteen colonies had to separate from Great Britain, arguing that "the Tea and the Stamp Act were not nearly so oppressive to the colonists as the Tariff Act is to Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, and Alabama."[11] Not all shared this argument, however. The Glasgow Herald claimed that, unlike the thirteen colonies who had no political representation, South Carolina did have representation in Congress, and its threat of secession could not therefore be justified. The Herald believed that the issue was the same as Ireland or Yorkshire seceding from England if they disliked certain individual laws.[12] The Courier provided a rebuttal to this view by questioning how the South Carolinians could "protect

[10] The Glasgow Evening Post and Paisley and Renfrewshire Reformer, 5.1.33.
[11] The Dumfries Courier, 1.1.33.
[12] The Glasgow Herald, 21.1.33.

themselves by their representatives against the votes of 19 or 20 states, which profit by their oppression, any more than the unrepresented colonies?"[13] Two weeks later, however, the Courier appeared to contradict its earlier arguments, by supporting President Jackson's stance against South Carolina. It claimed that the President "has the right, moral and constitutional, on his side,"[14] and called for his triumph. This inconsistency perhaps indicates the desire of newspapers to always choose the 'winning side' and appear to have their attitudes confirmed by events rather than be proved wrong. We will see that this tendency persisted during the American Civil War.

Despite such inconsistencies, newspaper correspondents had strong ideas about the success or otherwise of American federalism. The Scotsman firmly believed that the federal union would survive its trials, as it always had in the past. It did not deny that South Carolina had caused disruption, but it felt that the severity of the situation had been exaggerated, especially by certain political groups:

> Our conservatives are rejoicing over this factious proceeding as the harbinger of a dissolution of the federal compact. The conclusion, however, is rather hasty; for if they were familiar with the history of the Republic since 1783, they would know that disputes, as violent and threatening, have occurred repeatedly, and the Union has survived them all.[15]

This accusation against the Conservative party was also used by reformist liberals during the Civil War, who linked Conservative hostility towards the American Union to their opposition to electoral reform in Britain.

Others did not express such confidence in the American system, and blamed the federal structure for the problems which were arising. The Dumfries Courier echoed the opinions of the Edinburgh Evening Courant, arguing that federalism was weak and that the powers of the central government should be increased at the expense of the individual

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[13] The Dumfries Courier, 1.1.33.

[14] The Dumfries Courier, 15.1.33.

[15] The Scotsman, 5.1.33.

states because "without some precautions of this nature, the democratical machinery of the American Constitution will be again apt to go wrong."[16] The Edinburgh Evening Courant was extremely critical of the federal structure and argued that reform was the only solution. It firstly questioned the whole existence of local legislatures because it believed it was their multiplication which had led to disunity and dissent:

> by multiplying independent authorities, by making wheels within wheels, we not only increase the causes of dissension, but we put into the hands of the dissentients the instruments of mischief, which they are enabled, on the slightest cause of discontent, to wield against the supreme legislature, and to set its authority at defiance. [17]

It argued that the United States was particularly vulnerable to such mischief because of the constitutional rights of the states, and the rapid expansion of the country, which meant that "it is impossible . . . that the United States can ever firmly adhere or coalesce into one solid empire."[18] In Great Britain, on the other hand, the Courant was proud to point out that local legislatures had been abolished and that the result of this was that whenever disagreements occurred, no-one would "dream of revolting against the authority of Parliament, or of taking it upon himself to redress his own quarrel."[19] This is a particularly good example of the interplay between American and Scottish/British issues, which is the central theme of this thesis. The second part of the Courant's criticism concerned its belief that the Constitution of the United States did not bind the nation. Following Virginia's mediation in the Nullification Crisis, and its acceptance of the right of peaceful secession, the Courant argued that "such an excess of liberty . . . is incompatible with the stability of Government."[20] It argued that men needed to be bound together by a permanent political structure in order to be able to attain objectives conducive to the

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16 The Dumfries Courier, 23.4.33; the Edinburgh Evening Courant, 18.4.33.
17 The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 5.1.33.
18 The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 5.1.33.
19 The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 5.1.33.
20 The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 24.1.33.

common good. The American Constitution did not provide such a structure, the Courant argued. Instead, it allowed men to act within its boundaries to dissolve the Union, ensuring that any permanent stability was impossible.

The Scotsman, on the other hand, believed that while the federalist system may have caused the problem, it was federalism that had provided the solution, claiming that "the multiplicity of states which creates the danger of division, was in this case instrumental in providing a remedy."[21] It was "when the Carolinians saw that the most neutral and impartial of the Confederacy, while admitting their grievances to some extent, disappointed of their proceedings, they must have felt that their course was bad, as well as hopeless, in the event of a struggle."[22] The Scotsman stood alone in its belief that the American federal system was a successful one, which had always survived any problems facing it. The other newspapers criticised federalism on two fronts: firstly, because it was judged that the central government had insufficient powers to control the states; and secondly, that the Constitution was ineffective as a tool for binding the nation. This lack of confidence in the American political structure had as much to do with attitudes towards democracy at home as it had to American democracy. Those papers who opposed reform in Britain tended to criticise the operation of democracy in America, whilst those who supported reform were more likely to praise American political institutions. This was a consistent phenomenon throughout the nineteenth century.

The Nullification Crisis and Scottish Attitudes towards Majority Rule and Democracy

The Nullification Crisis, like the American Civil War, raised the issue of majority rule, and the right of the majority to bind the minority against its will. The Dumfries Times challenged the concept of majority rule most strongly during the Nullification Crisis, although given its Radical credentials its concerns were not about

21 The Scotsman, 17.4.33.
22 The Scotsman, 17.4.33.

'mob-rule' but about the rights of an oppressed minority. It supported the right of the majority to decide the course to be adopted in any dispute, but added that "the majority has no right to bind the minority, unless for objects, in the benefit of which all the community are partakers."[23] The Times supported South Carolina's stance with regard to what the paper judged to be an imposition of the tariff upon the state: "if it could be shown, in respect of any tax, that there was one individual in the community who could not receive benefit from the application of the revenue to be raised by it, from the impost that individual ought, in reason and justice, to go free."[24] The theory of majority rule was on the one hand acclaimed, but was also criticised if the minority was in full disagreement.

This supposed inconsistency can be rationalised if we describe South Carolina as a 'permanent minority.' This was how John C. Calhoun regarded the State, and it led him to support a system of 'minorities government' which would prevent the majority overriding the interests of a permanent minority. This subject was exhaustively discussed by Robert A. Dahl, who commented that supporters of nonmajoritarian systems of government often fail to recognise that minority tyranny can result, which overrides the rights of the majority. He stated that, "in a democratic country with a nonmajoritarian system, the protection of majorities against abusive minorities can be no stronger than the commitment of protected minorities not to abuse their opportunities to veto majority decisions they dislike."[25] Dahl argued that to suggest that the minority would only use its veto to protect its rights and interests was false, as minorities would also be in the position to "inflict positive harm on majority or on another minority."[26] This illustrates the difficulty which commentators faced when discussing the implications which the Nullification Crisis raised for the issue of majority rule. Radical papers such as the

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[23] The Dumfries Times, 17.1.33.
[24] The Dumfries Times, 17.1.33.
[25] Dahl, R.A. Democracy and its Critics. New Haven, 1989, p. 156.
[26] Dahl, Democracy, p. 156.

Dumfries Times felt compelled to support the rights of South Carolina even though they were keen advocates of political reform, and consequently, majority-rule in Britain.

Since the passing of the 1832 Reform Act, the Scottish electorate included most of the upper middle class, but still excluded large sections of the population: the lower middle classes and the working classes. In Britain, the wealthy landowners who continued to dominate and control Parliament, believed that it was only the educated and the wealthy who were fit to govern. A mass electorate, in the minds of the British elite, was regarded as mob-rule, and to be avoided. America illustrated mob-rule in action, in the eyes of British Conservatives, and the Nullification Crisis reinforced Conservative opinion, as did the American Civil War thirty years later. To British Conservatives, America served as a warning against further reform in Britain, where a constitutional monarchy and a restricted franchise allegedly ensured social stability, and any schism which occurred in America was seized upon as an illustration of the failings of democracy and republicanism as stabilising forces.

The Dumfries Courier claimed to be a friend of popular government, but argued that republics had a tendency to behave selfishly. It hoped that the North's selfishness would be short-lived, and that "sounder sentiments will prevail in the Union, and lead to the adoption of the system of reciprocity."[27] The Courier was clearly not in league with Conservative anti-reformists, however, since it criticised the connections which were often made between American politics and reform in Britain by anti-reformists: "the absolutists of England and the despots of the continent are almost as desirous to see a rupture of the republican states as they were for the defeat of the Reform Bill."[28] The Crisis also gave supporters of political reform encouragement, however, especially after its peaceful conclusion. The Glasgow Evening Post was pleased to comment that "[the] subdued tone of the Nullifiers, who were formerly determined to rush to arms . . . augurs well for peace . . .

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[27] The Dumfries Courier, 1.1.33.

[28] The Dumfries Courier, 1.1.33.

the people of that great Federal union will continue to be an eye-sore to the Boroughmongering Governments of the old world."[29] This comment signified Radical dissatisfaction with the 1832 Reform Act, and indicated that America would be looked to for democratic inspiration for some time to come.

Scottish Commentators' Attitudes towards the Probability of Civil War

In 1833 Scottish opinion was resigned to the possibility of war and dissolution in America, with even those commentators who did not expect an immediate war believing that the issues raised by the Nullification Crisis could cause a civil war in the future. The Dumfries Courier and the Scotsman were alone in refusing to believe that the Crisis would lead to dissolution. Both papers felt that those commentators who forecast great calamities were also those who were hoping for such.[30] Even when the Courier admitted that the people of South Carolina "have assumed a truly formidable attitude," it refused to accept the feasibility of civil war at this stage, claiming that "the idea of one state going to war with all the rest, is nearly as preposterous as Don Quixote's attack on the windmill."[31] The Scotsman was confident of a peaceful solution. On January 16th, 1833, it argued that "on two several occasions, we think, since the close of the Revolution; rebellion has raised its head in the United States; and in both it was extinguished, we believe, without spilling a drop of blood, by the mere exhibition of the armed force."[32] The Edinburgh Evening Courant, on the other hand, was as resolute in its expectation of civil war as the Scotsman was in expectation of a peaceful solution, owing to the former's Conservative leanings, no doubt. Early in 1833, the Courant stated that "the American Union will be afflicted with the dreadful calamity of civil war,"[33] although three days

29 The Glasgow Evening Post, 23.2.33.
30 The Scotsman, 5.1.33; the Dumfries Courier, 8.1.33.
31 The Dumfries Courier, 19.1.33.
32 The Scotsman, 16.1.33.
33 The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 14.1.33.

later it recognised the weakness of South Carolina's isolated stance by asserting that "the issue of the contest, if the parties actually come to blows, must depend on the support which the other states give to the Executive."[34] This view was also supported by the Paisley Advertiser which declared that "without the concurrence and co-operation of other States, of which there is at present no prospect, it will be quite in vain for Carolina to set itself in defiance to the General Government."[35] The Courant believed that the only way to avoid war was for the federal Government to accept South Carolina's demands, otherwise the paper did not see "how this calamity can be averted."[36] The Courant was also firm in its opinions as to the outcome of a civil war, seeing that both victory or defeat for the federal Government would be disastrous, probably reflecting its views on America as a whole:

> If the Carolinians are reduced by subjection by a military force, every vestige of freedom will be lost; they must be placed under despotic rule, and this will be absolutely necessary to continue in order to prevent a new rebellion against the supreme power. On the other hand, if the attempt of the President to reduce the refractory state should fail, open anarchy must be the consequence.[37]

It was not only Conservatives who envisaged the desirability of separation, however. The Radical Glasgow Evening Post welcomed separation on the grounds that it would render slavery inoperable.[38] We will see that this paper continued to espouse this view during the American Civil War.

Following the resolution of the Nullification Crisis, predictions of civil war did not abate. The Dumfries Courier reprinted an article from the Edinburgh Evening Courant, which envisioned a future civil war occurring. It stated that:

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[34] The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 17.1.33.
[35] The Paisley Advertiser, 19.1.33.
[36] The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 31.1.33.
[37] The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 16.2.33.
[38] The Glasgow Evening Post, 5.1.33.

> the Southern States and the Supreme Government were lately on the eve of a civil war; and what security does the American democracy present against the recurrence of this evil? Disputes may and will again arise from the jarring interests of the different members of the Union, and at present every dispute is attended with the risk of a breach in the unity of the American States.[39]

This echoed the Courant's belief that "sooner or later, from passion, prejudice, or supposed wrongs, divisions will arise, and will finally rend in pieces this great and growing empire."[40] The Glasgow Herald was also pessimistic about the permanent unity of America. Voicing an opinion which was common during the American Civil War, it forecasted the separation of the Union into "a northern, a southern, and a western confederation."[41] The Scotsman, on the other hand, was more optimistic, believing the Nullification Crisis to have taught some useful lessons:

> the northern states will see the danger of pushing the spirit of commercial and manufacturing monopoly too far; and the southern [states] will learn from the example of the Carolinians, that efforts to resist the general government cost much in money, trouble, and commercial embarrassment, and have little chance to succeed unless founded in reason and justice. [42]

It has been shown that there was a great deal of consistency in the newspapers' stances on the probability of civil war. Those papers, such as the Edinburgh Evening Courant, which were critical of American federalism were also most confident that civil war would occur. On the other hand, those papers who admired the American system, such as the Scotsman, were committed to the perpetuity of the American Union.

Analogies drawn between American Events and Great Britain's relationship with Ireland

The Scottish press was eager to make comparisons between American events and Ireland's relationship with Great Britain. In particular, it was Daniel O'Connell's

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[39] The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 18.4.33; the Dumfries Courier, 23.4.33.

[40] The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 4.2.33.

[41] The Glasgow Herald, 25.2.33; the Dumfries and Galloway Herald and Advertiser, 11.10.61, 15.8.62; the Dumfries Courier, 18.10.64.

[42] The Scotsman, 17.4.33.

proposals for a federation involving an Irish parliament for internal affairs, and co-operation with Britain with regard to foreign policy, that aroused most interest. The Scotsman was the first newspaper to raise the issue alongside the American events, when it warned British Conservatives to reserve judgement on the expected break-up of America. The paper suggested that the Conservatives were behaving towards America as the European Continent's politicians were behaving towards the Irish question, anticipating "the separation of the British empire into two or more rival states."[43] The Edinburgh Courant exhibited the sort of Conservatism that the Scotsman evidently had in mind. It reprinted an article from the London-based Globe which warned of the dangers of federalism, using both Ireland and America as examples. If a country such as America "where the people of all the states are bound together by the recollection of their combined efforts for independence and defence [and] by an extraordinary degree of national pride in their united greatness," could not survive in a federal structure, claimed the Globe, what hope was there for "a federal system which should form the only bond between England and Ireland?"[44] As a warning, the Globe and Courant stated that "it may be useful to see the danger of one of the two best federal systems, when we are to be bullied into a dismemberment of the kingdom in order to join the islands again under such a mockery of a federation as the O'Connellites propose."[45]

The Irish tithe involved the payment of one tenth of annual produce to the Anglican Church of Ireland and was very unpopular among the predominantly Catholic population. The Dumfries Times equated the tithe with the American Tariff, both in its alleged unfairness and in the way the respective governments approached the issue. The Times reported how "[President] Jackson talks in very nearly the same strain as our own ministry did about the Irish tithe law. With both parties it is 'the majesty of the law

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[43] The Scotsman, 5.1.33.
[44] The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 17.1.33.
[45] The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 17.1.33.

must be supported.'" It went on to doubt the resolve of President Jackson in threatening to use force, comparing him to the similarly ineffective "English ministry". The paper concluded that "in civilised nations, might and right will always be found on the same side at last. The tithes and the tariff must both equally depart; the Irish repeal, and the Carolinian repeal, equally, are to be laid to rest by concession, not by coercion."[46]

The Whig Scotsman also believed in a repeal of the Irish tithe, and criticised the ineffective way in which the issue was being handled. The paper was confident in the superiority of the American social and political system, claiming that "the Americans have one vast advantage. They are universally educated; and as a consequence, they are rational and provident beyond any other people."[47] It suggested that this had brought about a peaceful solution to the Nullification Crisis, and by contrast, it was much less confident about Britain's reaction to such a problem: "had similar dissension arisen between the worse educated and less tractable people of England and Ireland, under circumstances equally favourable to its operation, it would certainly have led to a summary 'repeal of the Union.'"[48] Later, in 1834, during the debate over the repeal of the Irish Tithe, the Scotsman made a direct appeal to the Conservatives to avoid a similar occurrence as had happened in America. It asked whether the Tory Peers would:

> blindly and destructively promote, instead of the public question of repeal, an inevitable public discussion in Ireland of separation from England? Are we to have a 'Nullification Question' in Europe, in imitation of the recent dangerous political contest in the United States?[49]

On the issue of the Irish Tithe, the Nullification Crisis gave commentators the opportunity to reinforce their attitudes on the question of Ireland. This tendency of the

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[46] The Dumfries Times, 17.1.33.
[47] The Scotsman, 17.4.33.
[48] The Scotsman, 17.4.33.
[49] The Scotsman, 9.8.34.

Scottish press to use American events to support their arguments on domestic issues was a constant theme throughout the nineteenth century. The American political system, with its advanced democratic machinery, offered British observers a glimpse into their own future; consequently, reactions to the American system and American events tended to be coloured by this perspective, and it will be shown that attitudes towards America were frequently the product of commentators' dreams or fears about Britain's future.

Conclusion

The Nullification Crisis provided the Scottish press with a real opportunity to analyse American political institutions, and the papers took up the challenge, expressing strong opinions, with some, such as the Scotsman, solid in their support for the federal system. Other newspapers, such as the Edinburgh Evening Courant, highlighted the inherent weaknesses of federalism exposed by the Nullification Crisis. Almost without exception, both city-based and provincial newspapers supported South Carolina, because of the alleged unfairness of the tariff, and also because of a belief in the state's right to secede. Ultimately, all were satisfied by the outcome of the crisis, but did not feel that the situation augured well for the future. Civil war seemed inevitable to all the newspapers, except the Scotsman, which believed that the Nullification Crisis had taught both North and South a lesson which would prevent such a war occurring in the future. Of most significance was the consistency with which American events were used to defend commentators' attitudes towards democracy at home. Consequently, American news was reported with this in mind, with Tory papers such as the Edinburgh Evening Courant and the Glasgow Herald eager to seize on the American developments as proof of the obvious failure of the American system; while a Whig paper such as the Scotsman was much more confident in the prospects for the American union. We will see that this was a perpetual feature of Scottish comment upon America throughout the antebellum period

and the Civil War period. In the majority of cases, both newspaper commentators and local groups and individuals commented on American political developments according to their views upon democratic reform at home.

Chapter 3: Dumfriesshire Attitudes towards Antebellum America

Chapter 3: Dumfriesshire Attitudes towards Antebellum America

The county of Dumfriesshire offers a very interesting perspective upon Scottish attitudes towards Antebellum America. In the nineteenth century, it was a predominantly agricultural region, with a small wool-textile industry. Despite its rural and agricultural status, however, the town of Dumfries was home to a distinct political identity during the nineteenth century, which was manifested through its vibrant newspaper press, its election of a Liberal-Radical Member of Parliament between 1841 and 1868, and its constant agitation for political reform throughout the period under discussion. The Member of Parliament for Dumfries, William Ewart, was instrumental in providing Dumfries with this identity as he had a national reputation for Liberal reform which then became associated with Dumfries itself. Evidence of this association was seen during the General Election of 1865, when Scottish attention concentrated upon the election for the Dumfries Burghs. According to the Dumfries Standard:

> all the leading newspapers of Scotland have been commenting upon it, and there is plenty of other evidence to shew that it has taken a deep hold of the public mind, and that its progress is viewed with increasing interest in all political circles ... [Ewart's] defeat - were that possible - would not simply be a blow to the Liberal cause, but a loss to the legislative power of the nation ... Liberalism is identified with Mr Ewart, not only here, but throughout the country.[1]

It will also be shown that Dumfriessians were particularly interested in America. Economically the region had been connected to America since the eighteenth century, when "for a time it had, through its outport at Carsethorn, more American tobacco trade than Glasgow."[2] Emigrant connections were also established in the mid-nineteenth century, with Truckell describing how "in 1851 from the port of Dumfries more than ten thousand people sailed for North America."[3] We will see that a great deal of interest was

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[1] The Dumfries and Galloway Standard, 5.7.65.

[2] Truckell, A. Supplementary Chapter to McDowall's History of Dumfries, p. 46.

[3] Truckell, in History of Dumfries, p. 48.

exhibited in American political developments, especially in relation to issues such as political representation and democracy in Britain, which were keenly debated at public meetings and in local newspapers. These debates regularly alluded to America as an example of a democratic nation, for good and ill, and this section will examine the ways in which the United States was viewed. This discussion will provide a background to our analysis of Dumfriesshire and the American Civil War, and help to explain the origins of Civil War opinions in the county.

It is possible to gain an important insight into Dumfriesshire attitudes towards antebellum America, as a result of the particular nature of the newspaper press in Dumfries, where four newspapers existed: the Dumfries Times (1833-42), the Dumfries and Galloway Courier (1809-1884), the Dumfries and Galloway Standard (1843-modern day), and the Dumfries and Galloway Herald and Register (1835-84). Not only was Dumfries home to a large number of newspapers, there was also a wide range of political opinion voiced by these papers. The Dumfries Times was a radical paper, edited and owned between 1833 and 1835 by Robert K. Douglas, a prominent radical who had previously edited the Birmingham Journal. From 1835 to 1842, the paper was owned by Thomas Harkness and James Brown, a former Dumfries Town Clerk, and was edited by Harkness. The Dumfries Courier was a Whig paper in the early years of this period, and was edited by George Allan from 1830. He was succeeded by John McDiarmid in 1837, who stayed until his death in 1852. Russell suggested that McDiarmid "made Dumfries the chief force in journalism outside of Edinburgh and Glasgow."[4] McDiarmid's son William took over and eventually moved the Courier further to the right, as the more Liberal Dumfries Standard began to increase its own readership. The Standard was established as an organ of the Free Church in 1843, and after the editorship of William Johnstone (1843-6), and Reverend William Goldie (1846), the paper was guided by William McDowall. The paper was

[4] Russell, J.A. The Book of Dumfriesshire. Dumfries, 1964, p. 82.

often on the verge of radicalism, but was generally considered a Liberal paper.[5] The Herald was a Conservative paper, with Thomas Aird, an occasional contributor to Blackwood's, the editor between 1835 and 1863. William Wallace succeeded him. Clearly, the range and the vitality of the Dumfries press is an illustration of the political appetite and the thirst for knowledge in the town and surrounding area. It was through this press that news from America was transmitted and in which reaction to that news was keenly debated.

Political Radicalism in Dumfries

The first indication we have of Dumfries' radical political identity is the town's support for the Chartist campaign during the 1830s and 1840s. This support followed local agitation in favour of the 1832 Reform Act, the legislation which failed to live up to radical expectations. In an article on Dumfries Chartism, Troup stated that, while the lack of heavy industry in Dumfries made the town's support for Chartism unusual, it was less surprising "when viewed in the light of the radical feelings at that time fairly strong in Dumfries."[6] Chartism in Dumfries mirrored the discordant nature of the national movement, although Troup described how "the [Dumfries] movement was a strong and significant body, particularly in the peak years 1839-42."[7] Perhaps the most influential episode occurred during the 1841 General Election campaign, when the Dumfries Chartists nominated their own candidate, Andrew Wardrop, against the Radical-Liberal candidate, William Ewart and the moderate-Liberal candidate, Sir Alexander Johnstone. Initially, the local Chartists were bitterly scathing of Ewart's radical credentials, accusing him of wavering in his support for universal suffrage and annual parliaments.[8] At

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[5] Cowan, The Newspaper in Scotland, p. 321.
[6] Troup, 'Chartism in Dumfries', p. 100.
[7] Troup, 'Chartism in Dumfries', p. 106.
[8] Chartist Poster, 29th June 1841: Dumfries and Galloway Collection.

a show of hands at the hustings, Wardrop won the vote, but on the realisation that he could not practically go on to win the seat he withdrew from the contest. Troup suggests that Wardrop's success influenced William Ewart, and led to his co-operation with the Chartists.[9] Consequently, Ewart was able to pick up Chartist votes and won the seat with a majority of 60 votes. Later that year, in November, Andrew Wardrop delivered a lecture to the Castle-Douglas Working Men's Association on the 'Rights of Labour' and the 'People's Charter.' According to the Dumfries Times, the meeting was well attended.[10] Further illustration of the continuing support for the Chartist cause in Dumfries was illustrated a year later at a meeting in Queensberry Square, Dumfries, in August 1842, described as "perhaps the largest outdoor [meeting] ever held in Dumfries."[11]

William Ewart is chiefly remembered for his advocacy of free libraries, a cause to which he was committed, and was instrumental in bringing about. During this campaign, he praised the superior public library system in America.[12] He was also a politician who embraced many radical issues and demonstrated, through his advocacy of such issues, a sympathy and admiration for American institutions. While M.P. for Liverpool in the 1830s, for example, he presented a petition to the Commons opposing capital punishment for horse-stealing, and Munford describes how "he even took the risk . . . of praising the superior criminal code of America."[13] He also demonstrated his support for national education, and in the 1840s he was made vice-president for England at the Brussels Universal Peace Congress of 1848, illustrating his pacifism.[14] During debates upon capital punishment in the House of Commons in 1864, Ewart defended his position by reference to the United States:

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[9] Troup, 'Chartism in Dumfries', pp. 106-7.
[10] The Dumfries Times, 29.11.41.
[11] The Dumfries Times, 10.8.42.
[12] Munford, William Ewart, p. 130.
[13] Munford, William Ewart, p. 61.
[14] Munford, William Ewart, pp. 61-2, p. 126.

> Will it be said that there are nations more refined than ours, and that the English are too barbarous to dispense with executions? Then we cite the case of a nation said to be even an exaggeration of ourselves - the United States - "No execution now takes place in Maine, and capital punishment has been abolished by law in Alabama, Michigan, and Louisiana without any evil results."[15]

This illustrates some of the issues that William Ewart was involved in, and confirms that the M.P. had radical beliefs and was clearly interested in American institutions. By 1841, the town of Dumfries was also engaged in the democracy debate, and was ready to assess democratic developments in the United States. We will examine this assessment in two stages: firstly, we will see how American democracy was viewed by Dumfries commentators; and secondly, we will judge the extent to which American political events influenced Dumfriesshire attitudes towards political reform in Britain.

Dumfriesshire Attitudes towards American Democracy 1832-1860

American presidential elections provided the local press with the greatest opportunity to discuss the political issues which were being debated in Britain from an American perspective. Particularly relevant were observations about the operation of the secret ballot in America. The Dumfriesshire press commented sporadically upon American elections, with some elections reported upon more extensively than others, as well as variance between the individual newspapers. This inconsistency in the reporting of presidential elections may reflect the level of interest in democratic issues, with periods such as the 1830s and 1840s being particularly receptive to the debates, whilst other times were less so. These two decades saw the American presidential elections being fought along new lines and with an increasing eye on the sectional difficulties of the country. The establishment of a two-party system in the 1830s, with competing and diverse Whig and Democratic parties saw a new style of election emerging, which highlighted the

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[15] Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Third Series, Vol. 174, 15 March 1864 - 3 May 1864, p. 2063.

presidential character of the candidates, and operated in a carnival style. Expansion became the key issue during the 1844 election, and in 1848, slavery began to be a divisive electoral issue.

During the 1836 presidential election the radical Dumfries Times illustrated its support for democratic reform by quoting from the London Morning Chronicle, which described how the conduct of the American polling was "highly creditable to the citizens of America . . . it speaks volumes in favour of vote by ballot."[16] The Times declared that there was no bribery or corruption in the election, although it accepted that the holders of public office were not completely incorruptible. During the 1840 election the Dumfries Courier took the opposite view, and printed an article from the New York Herald which described ballot frauds in America.[17] The Courier lamented the complicated nature of American elections, describing how the election "absorbs almost the entire attention of our Transatlantic contemporaries, but it is impossible to make head or tail of their contradictory statements."[18] The only conclusion which the Courier could reach was that "two things appear to be quite certain - Van Buren must win, and Harrison cannot lose."[19] The Courier at this stage, was clearly wary of democratic reform, and seemed cautious about reform going too far in Britain.

Commentators were most critical of the inability of American democracy to produce talented leaders. This was a constant criticism put forward by opponents of political reform, who pointed to America as evidence that the masses could not elect an effective leader. Following the victory of James Polk over Henry Clay in 1844, the Dumfries Herald described the election as evidence that "acknowledged talent and worth are nothing in a ruler . . . hence such men as Clay and Webster have no chance with a Polk,

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16 The Dumfries Times, 14.12.36.
17 The Dumfries Courier, 30.11.40.
18 The Dumfries Courier, 20.10.40.
19 The Dumfries Courier, 20.10.40.

who was never heard of before, but who is committed to pander to the wild will of the American populace."[20] The Conservative Herald was clearly suggesting that a government directly elected by the masses would tend to make popular decisions, rather than effective ones. The Courier also described the dearth of talented statesmen within the Democratic party and the inability of the Whig party to get its wiser leaders elected.[21] The opinions expressed during the Presidential elections of the mid-nineteenth century were symptomatic of the newspapers' views of American democracy and the concept of democracy in general. Supporters of democratic reform, such as the Dumfries Times also tended to praise American democracy, and pointed to the effective operation of the ballot and the electoral process in general in that country. Critics of democracy, such as the Herald, condemned American democracy for failing to produce talented statesmen and to prevent corruption. During the earlier elections, the newspapers were clearly using the American example to voice their own feelings about the recent British reform, and Chartist agitation that reform should go even further.

Further evidence of this tendency could be seen in the debate concerning the superiority of the United States Senate over the House of Representatives. The Dumfries Standard stated that "the Senate of the United States appears to be guided by a little more wisdom and prudence than the other House in the adoption of legislative measures,"[22] and, the Courier also praised the Senate in defence of the House of Lords:

> that a second chamber or Court of Review is absolutely necessary in a mixed government every reflecting man must admit; and it may even be added that the Senate of America have in repeated instances saved the Republic, by interposing their authority between the people, and the enthusiastic rashness of the House of Representatives.[23]

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[20] The Dumfries Herald, 28.11.44.
[21] The Dumfries Courier, 2.12.44.
[22] The Dumfries Standard, 5.3.45.
[23] The Dumfries Courier, 11.5.36.

This praise of the United States Senate originated from the fact that the Senate was not directly elected or based on popular representation. In essence, therefore, the praise given to the Senate remained a criticism of democracy. This illustrates that even non-Conservative papers felt uneasy about democracy along American lines, as they expressed doubts about the ability of the "people" and their representatives to govern effectively.

Some criticism of America was voiced by Liberals who were concerned that at times democracy was compromised in the United States. For example, in 1840, the radical Dumfries Times praised General Harrison for his intention to hold the Presidential office for one term only, as the paper felt that "the prolongation of the Presidential office by one person is considered by many to be anti-republican, and rather verging towards monarchy."[24] Following the rise of the 'Know-nothings' in America in the 1850s, the Dumfries Standard criticised the anti-Catholic feeling of the party as "[smacking] too much of Orangeism to secure our fullest sympathy,"[25] an interesting comment coming from a paper in the South-West of Scotland, an area with a strong covenanting heritage.

The period of American westward expansion during the 1840s gave rise to a debate amongst the Dumfries press which also related to the issue of democracy. Firstly, concern was voiced that it was the nature of the democratic system which was causing the desire for territorial expansion. Secondly, concern arose over the ability of the United States to sustain its democracy over such a large geographical region. The first accusation that the democratic system was at the root of the issue was voiced by the Dumfries Standard, which suggested in 1844 that President Tyler's approach to the annexation of Texas was geared to winning the election, a clear indictment of democracy.[26] In May 1845, the Courier used the Oregon Controversy to argue the same point, suggesting that President Polk was too conscious of the feelings of the mass electorate, and would be forced to act in accordance

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[24] The Dumfries Times, 9.11.40.
[25] The Dumfries Standard, 20.9.54.
[26] The Dumfries Standard, 3.7.44.

with their will, rather than take the correct line of policy. The British Government was more able to take a rational view, argued the Courier: "Lord Aberdeen [Foreign Secretary] has his hands free, President Polk has his tied; and on such a point as this, democratic Governments must be in a disadvantageous position compared with monarchial."[27]

The second major concern expressed about expansion was the ability of the United States Government to hold the whole nation together. Special concern was voiced about the growing power of the South, with regard to the slavery issue, with the Courier describing how "in time, the growing empire of America will probably fall to pieces by its own weight."[28] This represented a very early acknowledgement of the factors leading to the Civil War. The Courier was clearly aware that the growing size of the American nation would lead to conflicts over slavery. During the Civil War itself, we will see that a constant criticism voiced by local commentators about the North was that the nation was too big to be controlled by one government. The ability of the federal government to maintain law and order was also questioned during the antebellum period, with the Herald describing how "the power of the American government is confessedly weak, to control the lawless population of her distant frontiers, and the Texans assuredly would not be the least backward in setting her acts at defiance when in opposition to their wishes."[29] The Courier also spoke of "the inability of Federalism to regulate and restrain 'the fierce democracy.'"[30] It is interesting to see how the Dumfries press related the subject of expansionism to the debate about democracy yet again. The Courier, as we have seen, was most vociferous on this subject, claiming that President Polk was unduly influenced by the electoral masses, and that the British Government was 'unrestrained' in this respect. The papers also repeatedly voiced their concerns about the inability of the federal government

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[27] The Dumfries Courier, 11.5.45.
[28] The Dumfries Courier, 20.5.44.
[29] The Dumfries Herald, 11.5.38.
[30] The Dumfries Courier, 24.4.38.

to control the newly acquired provinces, and concluded that the central government was not strong enough. This, as we will see, is an interesting view given local support for the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights. What is most likely, of course, is that critics of democratic reform in Britain were concerned about the growth in the power of the United States as its size grew, from the point of view of the democracy debate in Britain, but also out of pure concern for the balance of power in the world.

Overwhelmingly, we can see that the attitude of Dumfries commentators towards reform at home influenced their views on America. Predictably, those who favoured political reform praised America, while those opposed to reform criticised the institutions of the United States. What is of more interest to us is the extent to which American democracy influenced attempts at reform in Britain. It follows from this discussion that supporters of reform praised American democracy to further their own cause, whilst opponents criticised the American experience for the same reason. The next section will examine the ways in which this was manifested, as supporters and opponents of reform used the American experience to further their own campaigns.

The Influence of America upon Dumfriesshire Attitudes towards Political Reform

In his study of Great Britain and the American Civil War, Adams described how "from 1850 to 1860, as in every previous decade, British writing on America was coloured by the author's attitude on political institutions at home. The 'example' of America was constantly on the horizon in British politics."[31] American democracy was similarly used in Dumfriesshire by both those in favour of and those against reform in Britain to support their arguments. The main proponent of British political enfranchisement along American lines amongst the Dumfriesshire press was the Dumfries Times, with the other papers generally tending to favour the status quo to a greater or lesser extent. Public meetings

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[31] Adams, Civil War, vol. 2, pp. 275-6.

were also held in the area, some specifically to debate reform, and others held as campaign vehicles for election candidates. Mention of America arose, although it is interesting to note that supporters of reform, such as William Ewart, M.P., were not always willing to cite the United States in defence of their views. At a meeting in Dumfries, in 1842, Ewart spoke in favour of a wider franchise and a secret ballot, but did not make any reference to America.[32] Critics of democracy were always a lot more eager to comment upon the failures of the American experience.

The earliest meetings of the period concentrated upon the inadequacies of the 1832 Reform Act. One such meeting took place on the 22nd of December, 1837, in the Old Assembly Rooms, Dumfries. The purpose of the meeting was "to petition the legislature in favour of voting by ballot in the election of Members to represent the people in Parliament."[33] One of the main speakers was Thomas Harkness, the publisher and editor of the Radical Dumfries Times. Mr Harkness dismissed the argument expressed by those opposed to reform, that the ballot had failed in America and France, and argued:

> the Ballot does work well in America; and what is more, the American people, the best judges of what suits themselves, say the Ballot is the best way of voting. Is this not good authority? If Ballot was inimical to the people's rights would they continue to uphold it? Have they not the power to abolish the system of voting by Ballot? Certainly. The fact then of their continuing it is proof positive it is a good system of voting, aye, better than open voting. It works well; the Government works well with it. The nation is great and flourishing beyond precedent. Is this, and the people's approbation of the Ballot, not positive and incontrovertible evidence that the Ballot works well in America?[34]

This meeting was interesting because it illustrated a rare occasion on which America was praised in direct defence of reform in Britain. The fact that it was the editor of the Dumfries Times that made such a reference to America proves that it was only radicals who felt comfortable in associating themselves with the United States.

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[32] The Dumfries Courier, 14.11.42.

[33] The Dumfries Courier, 27.12.37.

[34] The Dumfries Times, 27.12.37.

General Elections also led to public meetings, during which America was often commented upon, alongside debates about political reform. On 29th August, 1851, William Ewart spoke at the Court-House, Dumfries. He discussed the merits of extending suffrage, and also spoke about the political education which could be achieved by introducing more local self-government. He did not go so far as to campaign for American-style political institutions in Britain, but he praised America alongside Britain:

> There are two countries similar in spirit, though not the same in the form of Government, viz., Great Britain and the United States; and the great secret of the repose enjoyed in these countries lies in this: they leave the people free - the one under a Republican, and the other under a Monarchial Government - to exercise all the duties of local legislation; they are thus trained in the habits of self-control, and they submit cheerfully to the laws because they have had the power of making the laws.[35]

Ewart clearly had sympathy with this idea of local politics. He saw local control as educational and an effective way of making and enforcing the law. This was an indication of his dislike of strong central-government, a common theme in Britain in the nineteenth century. Ewart again gave cautious praise of the United States during his election message of 1852. He stated that, "after the alternate triumphs of anarchy and despotism which we have witnessed in the world, there remain only two really free nations - Great Britain and America."[36] Given Ewart's support for the secret ballot and household suffrage, and his earlier sympathy with Chartism, it is doubtful that he really believed in the true freedom of the British people having 'the power of making the laws.' It is more probable that this was the closest that he felt able to go in praising America as a free republic.

There is clear evidence of Conservative opposition to American democracy in nineteenth-century Dumfries. On 19th April, 1859, the Tory candidate for the Dumfries

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[35] The Dumfries Courier, 30.8.51.

[36] The Dumfries Courier, 30.3.52.

Burghs, Captain Walker, spoke at a meeting in the Assembly Rooms, Dumfries. He criticised the operation of the ballot in America and described how a consequence of the ballot was "corruption among the electors, and a derangement of the business of the legislative bodies, to which in our country we were quite unaccustomed."[37] In March, 1859 a meeting was held in Dumfries to debate the ill-fated Government Reform Bill. A Mr Hogg spoke from the body of the hall,[38] and urged the meeting to look at the practical operation of the ballot: "it was the system in France and in America, and yet the one was a despotism, and at the present moment threatening to embroil the continent of Europe in war; slavery and corruption were rampant in the other."[39] It will become apparent as we go on that Conservative critics of democracy constantly used slavery as a means of downgrading American democracy.

Of the newspapers, the Dumfries Times was the only one to strongly favour reform and to praise American politics. The early 1830s saw the Bank Crisis engulfing American politics. An unpopular institution for a variety of reasons, President Jackson was opposed to the Bank of the United States because of its extensive powers and its financial support for his political rivals. In July 1832, Congress passed the new Bank Charter, which was immediately vetoed by Jackson. He managed to appeal to the American people by voicing fears of foreign influence, of excessive central government power, and privilege for the rich. The 1832 Presidential Election saw the Bank Crisis as the main issue, and Jackson won an overwhelming victory. In 1833, Jackson removed government deposits from the Bank and transferred them to State banks. The Manager of the Bank, Nicholas Biddle, contracted credit facilities at the Bank in order to depress the economy and force the public to demand its recharter. President Jackson hit back by claiming that this merely proved that the Bank's powers were excessive. In the summer of 1834 the Crisis ended when

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37 The Dumfries Courier, 26.4.59.

38 Probably one of the family of drapers in Dumfries called Hogg.

39 The Dumfries Standard, 23.3.59.

Biddle reversed his credit policy. British radicals enthusiastically received news of Jackson's struggle against the Bank,[40] with the Dumfries Times anxious for the American Government to enforce its own authority. The Times stated that "the proud democracy of America are not to be subjected like the shopocracy of England, to the selfish manoeuvres of a handful of stock-jobbers and Jews."[41] The Crisis further highlighted concerns about the encroaching power of central government. Jackson argued that society was already unequal enough, without the Government adding to the inequality by protecting the privileges of the rich. Clearly, the radical Times appreciated such a stance.

The Caroline incident in 1837, and the resulting McLeod case in 1838, led to further comment and controversy amongst the local press. The episode originated in the dispute over the Canadian territory, and the efforts of rebels in Upper Canada to move towards American annexation. One of these rebels, William L. Mackenzie, a Scotsman, had established himself at Buffalo, over the United States border. On 29th December, 1837, an American vessel, Caroline, which was carrying supplies to Mackenzie's rebels, was sunk by a British steamer. Comment in the British press was minimal at this stage, and it was not until the State of New York arrested Alexander McLeod, and charged him with being one of the British crew who had murdered an American during the Caroline incident, that British reaction was provoked. Although Palmerston threatened war, the Federal Government was unable to force New York State to hand McLeod over. At his trial, McLeod was able to provide an alibi and was therefore acquitted. Despite some hysterical condemnations of the American government amongst the British,[42] the Dumfries Times actually praised the conduct of the American government over that of the British:

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40 Lillibridge, Beacon of Freedom, p. 66.

41 The Dumfries Times, 29.1.34.

42 Lillibridge, Beacon of Freedom, p. 61.

> we read with real satisfaction the sensible and considerate remarks expressed by some of the American statesmen, the tone and temper of whose speeches are alike just and expedient - breathing a respect for law, government, and order, a dread of bloodshed and anarchy - which contrasts most favourably with the reckless denunciations of some of our British Representatives.[43]

The remainder of the Dumfries press was generally wary of further democratic reform in Britain, and was especially opposed to the American model. As early as 1835, the Courier commented that "the experience of France and America is not so favourable to the Ballot as to entitle it to appeal to the test of experiment."[44] One of the main criticisms of democracy was that elected leaders were at the mercy of their electorate, and consequently took popular decisions rather than the more difficult and necessary ones. This fear was exacerbated when leaders were perceived as being unstable themselves. In 1846, the Dumfries Standard remarked that:

> the great democracy of the West is guided by other rules, and liable to other influences than those which govern the more staid and regular Governments of Europe. Its councils are more violent and precipitate than its own admirers have been led to expect. Where the multitude bear such sway the responsibility of the rulers must be weakened, and their caution overborne, if not actually changed into rashness. But when such a multitude has elevated to its head a headstrong and impetuous man - for example, a Jackson or a Polk - the type of its own passions, the instrument of its own resolves, it is then enabled and ready to rush into all manners of unreasonable violence.[45]

During this mid-nineteenth century period, the anti-reform newspapers either pointed out that Britons were content with their own system of government, or tried to persuade them that they ought to be, given the American experience. The Tory Herald held this view, commenting that "the free suffrage of the United States will never work well for the good of that great community, though the national mind and heart are determined to have it. But we have no fear that the British people will ever calmly demand such a licentious

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43 The Dumfries Times, 7.2.38.

44 The Dumfries Courier, 28.1.35.

45 The Dumfries Standard, 11.3.46.

power."[46] In response to one of the Chartists' demands that Members of Parliament should be paid a salary, the Courier chose to draw a parallel with the American experience of such matters: "in the United States the salary of members of Congress has long been fixed at eight dollars daily . . . for doing next to nothing."[47] The moves towards political reform in the late 1850s alarmed the Herald: "if all this sort of thing go on, we shall soon be at universal suffrage as in America. Then farewell, Church; and farewell, Monarchy!"[48]

At this stage, it will be useful to examine the importance of one of the most controversial politicians of the nineteenth century, the radical John Bright. Such an examination is needed because we will see the extent to which Bright was alluded to amongst Dumfriesshire commentators. John Bright was an enigmatic and stirring politician, renowned for his oratory and his commitment to radical issues such as Corn Law repeal and franchise reform. Consequently, his speeches were widely reported and commented upon. He was also passionate in his support for the political institutions of the United States, and was vocal about his desire to see similar institutions in Britain. John Bright also managed to alienate a great many people, however, from across the social classes. His political style irritated his peers, who disliked his refusal to ever admit doubts about his beliefs. Criticism also came from establishment figures who were fearful about his treatment of the class issue, with Palmerston denouncing Bright as "a danger to social peace."[49] He also aroused anger among the working classes as a result of his opposition to factory legislation, a view originating in his commitment to *laissez-faire* economics. In Scotland too, this stance managed to provoke anger among trade-unionists, such as Alexander Campbell, who viewed Bright as "a figure of intense suspicion."[50]

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[46] The Dumfries Herald, 14.9.43.

[47] The Dumfries Courier, 23.1.49.

[48] The Dumfries Herald, 18.6.58.

[49] Briggs, A. Victorian People: A Reassessment of Persons and Themes 1851-67. Harmondsworth, 1965, p. 207.

[50] Fraser, W.H. Alexander Campbell and the Search for Socialism. Manchester, 1996, p. 162.

In the winter of 1858-9, John Bright embarked upon a tour of Britain, making speeches in favour of democratic reform. It appeared that it was particularly Bright's obsession with the American experience of democracy which aroused most criticism in Dumfries. The Courier was extremely critical of Bright's campaign. Yes, America was thriving, but Bright was wrong to attribute this solely to universal suffrage, argued the Courier. The paper concluded that it was its hope "that the people of this country will entertain a wholesome dislike to any project for Americanizing their institutions."[51] The Standard also joined in the criticism of Bright, claiming that "Mr Bright's repeated references to the United States as the sole seat of true freedom, were surely at fault. So long as four millions of people are kept in bondage there, no Briton need fear to compare his own country with America . . . life and property are more secure with us; the laws are more respected and better enforced; in everything almost, save taxation, our position is preferable to theirs."[52] It is interesting to note that the Standard was basing its criticism of America upon the existence of slavery. Analysis of the Civil War period will illustrate that this issue continued to influence the Standard's attitude towards America.

The American experience of democracy was clearly of interest to observers in Dumfriesshire. Most of these observers were anti-reform, and used the American experience to illustrate their dislike of democracy. Some, such as William Ewart, were in favour of reform; to the extent that he was often aligned with John Bright and Richard Cobden, but were unwilling to go as far as them in describing the advantages which America offered. This section has shown how important the democracy debate was when comment was being made about America. This will help to clarify the reaction of the press during the American Civil War, as it appears that any acceptance of American democratic practices was seen as akin to wishing the same upon Britain, something which critics of democracy were clearly loathe to do. In addition, the stance taken by

[51] The Dumfries Courier, 2.11.58.
[52] The Dumfries Standard, 3.11.58.

individuals such as John Bright would also become pivotal in influencing the stand which others took.

Dumfriesshire Reactions to American Federalism and the Sectional Crisis of the 1850s

In the antebellum period doubts were expressed by the Dumfries press about the relationship between federal power and state power in America. While concerns arose about the alleged excessive power of the American President, the papers also complained that the central government lacked control over the states, and that the collisions between the states, if left uncontrolled, would end in a dissolution of the Union. This contradiction illustrates that most of the criticisms came from those newspapers which were generally critical of the institutions of the United States. Very little support was shown for the concept of states' rights, which is an interesting attitude, coming at a time when there was increasing dissatisfaction in Scotland with regard to the Scottish relationship with Westminster. In Scotland, the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights argued that too many Scottish decisions were made at Westminster, with minimal Scottish involvement in decision-making.[53] In Dumfries, however, only the Standard appeared to support the objectives of the Association, describing how:

> an association has been formed for the vindication of Scottish rights and the redress of Scottish wrongs. We cordially sympathize with the object of this association, and with the mode of obtaining it we do not quarrel, since the actings of the present and of past governments clearly shew that no redress for any grievance, and no acknowledgement of any right, can be pounded but by agitation and compulsion.[54]

Those papers which did not express support for the N.A.V.S.R. were the same papers which tended to support a strong central government in the United States. In 1839,

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[53] For a comprehensive discussion about the activities of the N.A.V.S.R., see Morton, Unionist Nationalism, pp.133-54.

[54] The Dumfries Standard, 21.9.53.

the Courier was critical of the freedom of the individual states, commenting that "each state is so far independent, and may thus sin in the phrenzy [sic] of the moment against the better judgement of the supreme government."[55] Finally, in 1845, the Courier, commenting on the possibility of war between Britain and America over the Oregon territory, stressed that "we do not blame the nation *en masse* - far from it: but rather a form of government which leaves the Executive powerless for good or evil in the separate states."[56] The newspapers were even critical of politicians who supported states' rights. When the Dumfries Times described how President Harrison was flattering "the prejudices and power of the individual states, [and] harbours or feigns to harbour, fears of the power of the Federal Government,"[57] the paper was scathing. The general feeling was that the central government was unable to control the whole of the country. In 1839, the Herald described the central executive as being "quite powerless in putting down the violences of its own frontier subjects,"[58] following riots at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and in 1859, it stated that "the authority of the central Government scarcely circulates to the extremities of the Republic."[59]

The overwhelming feeling in Dumfriesshire was that state powers in America were excessive and central powers insufficient, especially amongst those who did not openly lend their support to the N.A.V.S.R. This attitude may have arisen as much out of general dislike of the United States, as out of real understanding of the federal-state power debate, but this discussion proves useful to us on another important point. We have seen that the Dumfriesshire press did not support the arguments for increased state rights in the antebellum period. We will see, however, that this did not lead to overwhelming support for the North during the conflict.

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[55] The Dumfries Courier, 2.4.39.
[56] The Dumfries Courier, 1.12.45.
[57] The Dumfries Times, 29.3.41.
[58] The Dumfries Herald, 4.1.39.
[59] The Dumfries Herald, 7.10.59.

In the 1850s, with the growing agitation over the issue of slavery, and the troubles in Kansas and Nebraska, the likelihood of civil war in America was beginning to be recognised in Dumfriesshire and, in some cases, was also welcomed. The period also illustrated the difficulty of making predictions about the future of America. In 1852, the Courier was confident that "sectional animosities between the North and South have died, and are still dying away. Beyond harmless agitation touching the triumph of political parties at the next election, confidence in the stability of the Federal Union is restored."[60] The Courier was later to revise its opinion. The dispute in Kansas arose over the adoption of the popular sovereignty doctrine to decide whether the state would be a free state or a slave state. As a consequence, both sides became committed to fighting over the territory, which became known as 'Bleeding Kansas'. The local papers recognised the importance of the Kansas question, with the Herald describing the affair as an indictment upon the liberty of the 'Model Republic,'[61] stating that "it is painful to think that a great nation, which calls itself Christian, does not yet see the necessity of putting an end to the system of slavery."[62] The Standard was concerned about the consequences of the admission of Kansas to the Union as a slave state, with the paper commenting that the future prospects for the slave would be worsened, and the probability of disunion increased.[63] The Dumfries Standard was the only paper to offer concrete criticism of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, which permitted the operation of slavery in Kansas. The paper blamed "the unscrupulous violence of the Southern Slaveholders, aided by the collusion or weakness of some men of the North,"[64] but fervently hoped that a great deal of revulsion would be felt in the North as a result of the bill. This is an example of the solidly pro-North attitude which the Dumfries Standard took in considering the possibility of a civil

60 The Dumfries Courier, 9.3.52.
61 The Dumfries Herald, 15.1.58.
62 The Dumfries Herald, 9.4.58.
63 The Dumfries Standard, 10.9.56.
64 The Dumfries Standard, 5.7.54.

war. We will see, however, that the paper did not maintain this strong stance during the War itself.

The newspapers of Dumfries were more sympathetic towards the Northern states than the Southern states in the 1850s, and this was mainly the result of their opposition to slavery. As sectional divisions were only beginning to intensify in the 1850s, it was not until the secession of the Southern States in 1861 that Scottish sympathies for the Southern nation struggling for self-determination were aroused. An awareness that the issue of slavery was inextricably linked to the survival of the union had also developed by the late 1850s. The Standard took this view, stating that "this 'peculiar institution,' as it is called, must be got rid of before the Great Republic can expect to enjoy internal tranquillity."[65] The Courier recognised the difficulty of solving the problem. If separation took place, the paper feared that either slavery would be perpetuated, or that a servile war would ensue. On the other hand, it also feared that without separation the troubles in Kansas would spread and civil war would engulf the whole country.[66] These attitudes were not sustained during the American Civil War, and we shall see that there was little sympathy for the North's position. It will become clear that slavery was not the only issue of relevance. Other factors, such as attitudes towards democracy, became much more important in the formulation of opinions during the 1860s.

Attitudes in Dumfries towards American Slavery

In the antebellum period the local press of Dumfries was most concerned with the issue of slavery, and showed little interest in debates about states' rights and concepts of Union. The debate about whether the existence of slavery was in the hands of the State or Federal Legislatures did not arise at all. Although the issue of slavery was of obvious concern in the town, there was, however, little apparent abolitionist activity. The only

[65] The Dumfries Standard, 17.6.57.
[66] The Dumfries Courier, 16.9.56.

mention of activity is in the Dumfries Times of 24th April, 1833, the year that slavery was abolished in the British Empire. The paper described a meeting being called by Provost Corson "in order to consider the propriety of petitioning Parliament for the abolition of slavery, and also of forming an association of the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood, to act in conjunction with other similar associations throughout the three counties and to be denominated, the Dumfries and Galloway Anti-Slavery Society."[67] No other details have been found. It is likely that interested individuals worked within the Glasgow Emancipation Society or elsewhere, as the occasional lectures given in Dumfries and Stranraer on the issue of slavery certainly indicates that interest did exist on the subject. This interest was also illustrated by the fact that slavery proved to be the major concern of newspaper commentators when reporting on Presidential elections during the 1850s.[68] In addition, as in other regions, the slavery issue served to affect the democracy debate, by undermining the credibility of the reformers' arguments.

The local papers were adamant that liberty could not exist in America alongside slavery, which also provided a convenient argument against the morality of democracy. Even the Dumfries Times stated that:

> the Americans have what they call 'liberty;' but it is a freedom to do mischief - liberty without morality and religion; freedom and enlightenment, which encourages them to hold the unhallowed doctrine, and practice the revolting tyranny, of holding fellow man in unchristian bondage - in slavery.[69]

This illustrates that slavery was so powerful an issue it could make even a radical paper criticise America. Other papers, less enamoured with democracy, also used the issue to denigrate American freedom: the Courier described slavery as "a gross anomaly utterly irreconcilable with the idea of a republic boasting of the freest institutions in the

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[67] The Dumfries Times, 24.4.33.

[68] The Dumfries Standard, 24.12.52, 4.5.53, 17.12.56; the Dumfries Courier, 23.11.52, 18.11.56, 25.11.56.

[69] The Dumfries Times, 4.10.41.

world,"[70] and in 1851, the Standard argued that America had no moral right to criticise other nations' lack of liberty when it "is guilty of crying acts of oppression."[71] The paper stated that America would never:

> be able to exercise a great moral influence in the affairs of Europe till their own domestic policy in one particular point is thoroughly revolutionised. Need we say that that point is slavery?... it is sad to think that the existence of slavery in America may be exercising a fostering influence upon the despotisms of the old world.[72]

In addition, the local newspapers also used slavery to criticise the American political system. The Standard used the issue to illustrate its dislike of republican forms of government. The paper claimed that, "the existence of slavery ... [proves] first, that, of all tyrannies, that of a republic is the worst; and, secondly, that when a republic is corrupt, it is, of all forms of government, the most difficult to reform."[73] This criticism of republican government as upholding slavery was a common one during this period. The Dumfries Times and Courier, however, attributed most blame to the Southern States, a familiar tendency amongst papers that supported some measure of political reform in Britain. The Times described how:

> the southern slavish states of slave holders in America are carrying their doctrines and practice of their absolute and social right, to hold human beings in slavery, with a high hand. These heartless hypocrites - these dastardly pretenders to freedom and free institutions are all but unanimous. Mischief will ere long come upon them for their cruelty and hypocrisy.[74]

The Courier also contributed to the criticism of the Southern States, commenting that "Jonathon, it appears, is still going fast a-head, and in some of the Southern States

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[70] The Dumfries Courier, 1.1.44.
[71] The Dumfries Standard, 17.12.51.
[72] The Dumfries Standard, 17.12.51.
[73] The Dumfries Standard, 4.5.53.
[74] The Dumfries Times, 16.1.39.

conducting himself in a manner which forms a perfect libel on the Republican liberty of which he boasts so loudly, and, in the same breath, denies to others."[75]

There was a general consensus that the slavery issue would eventually lead to the break-up of the United States, even before the sectional crisis of the 1850s. In 1835, the Courier argued that collision between North and South was inevitable,[76] while the Herald believed that "the agitation of the slave question in America, is threatening almost to dissolve the federal union."[77] In 1850, the Standard argued that "the existence of slavery and the continuance of the Federative Union of the States will, we are assured, soon be deemed incompatible, - and we consider it not at all unlikely that the attempt to root out the former will result in a dissolution of the Union."[78] The Courier reiterated its views in 1850, arguing that "slavery, as we have often said, is the great plague-spot of the United States, which sooner or later, must engender heart-burnings, quarrels, and separations the wisest are unable to anticipate at present."[79]

In 1844, the newly created Free Church of Scotland sent deputations to America to raise money for the new church. Among the donations received were some from Southern slaveholders. A split consequently occurred between those who felt that the donations were legitimate, and those who established the 'Send Back the Money' campaign.[80] The Dumfries Standard, which was established in 1843 as an organ of the Free Church, did not

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[75] The Dumfries Courier, 29.9.45. The terms 'Jonathon' and 'Brother Jonathon' were commonly used by nineteenth century commentators, especially those who were hostile to America, to refer to the United States or the people of the United States. The term is said to have originated from Jonathon Trumbull, the Governor of Connecticut, who was a friend and advisor to General George Washington. [The Oxford English Dictionary, vol. V (H-K), Oxford, 1961, p. 603.]

[76] The Dumfries Courier, 16.9.35.

[77] The Dumfries Herald, 18.9.35.

[78] The Dumfries Standard, 20.3.50.

[79] The Dumfries Courier, 8.1.50.

[80] For more information on the subject of the Free Church's involvement in the American South, see two articles by G. Shepperson: 'The Free Church and American Slavery.' Scottish Historical Review 30 (1951), pp. 126-43; 'Thomas Chalmers, the Free Church and the American South.' Journal of Southern History 17 (1951), pp. 317-37.

support the campaign. It supported the party line laid down by Thomas Chalmers, the first moderator of the Free Church:

> when a deputation, whose object and character are known, obtain from a public meeting a sum of money in furtherance of that object, the meeting agrees with the sentiments of the deputation, and not the deputation with the sentiments of the meeting ... it is not the prerogative of man to adjudicate upon the motives and the character of contributors.[81]

The Herald supported the 'Send Back the Money' campaign, which irritated its traditional adversary, the Standard, which retorted, "when will such persons cry out, Send back the cotton! Burn the tobacco! Let's have none of the rice! No slavery-polluted articles from America!"[82] pointing at the hypocrisy of the campaign. The positions taken by the Standard and the Herald, however, related more to their attitudes towards the Free Church and to each other, than to the Southern States of America.

Slavery was seen by some to be the overriding crime in America in the mid-nineteenth century. It contradicted the concept of American freedom and democracy, and it was increasingly seen that it would inevitably lead to the break-up of the Union. Moreover, the electoral battles that were fought over the slavery issue in the 1850s illustrated to critics of democracy the faults inherent in the system. It was widely believed that President Pierce had won the 1852 election by capitulating to the slaveholders, and that Buchanan's victory in 1856 illustrated that democracy did not improve the minds of the masses, but corrupted them. The question of who should decide the future of slavery, the central government or the state governments, was not of great concern in Dumfriesshire. The Dumfries Standard, however, did praise the Fugitive Slave Law, which could be described as a 'national law,' because it believed that the law would unite the northern and southern states. The slavery issue was the subject which aroused

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81 The Dumfries Standard, 8.1.45.

82 The Dumfries Standard, 13.5.46.

most interest and emotion in the antebellum period, but it was also used, as we have seen, to demonstrate some of the failings of democracy in America. Most interesting of all are the accusations that democratic leadership necessarily involves subservience to the uninformed prejudices of the masses, and that democracy corrupts rather than informs a mass electorate.

Conclusion

This survey of Dumfriesshire opinion in the antebellum period has shown that, almost without exception, attitudes towards America were more reflective of feelings towards democratic reform at home than about America itself. This was the case, not only with regard to discussion on American electoral practices and democratic developments, but also in comment upon issues such as federal and state power, and territorial expansion. Slavery was the only issue upon which commentators took a united view, regardless of their feelings towards political reform. This was because slavery was an emotive issue which aroused hostility among all observers. It would continue to do so, and we will see that this proved to be the major obstacle to Northern support during the Civil War. This section has also demonstrated that the region's local identity was important with regard to comment upon antebellum political developments. The existence of a landed and agricultural interest in Dumfriesshire gave the county a significant Conservative presence which was reflected in the opinions voiced in the Dumfries Herald, and in the later antebellum period, by the Dumfries Courier. This presence seemed to limit the amount of political activity in Dumfries at times when democratic reform was not a central issue. Therefore, there was little public agitation on matters concerning reform at this time. In addition, we have seen the reticence which the radical-liberal William Ewart exercised in his reluctance to quote American experience in defence of his support for political reform. Perhaps his caution was symbolic of a perceived sense of conservatism at this time

in Dumfries. Partly due to Conservative influence, and no doubt to the agricultural nature of the region, this nevertheless illustrated the distinct nature of the region as compared to the industrial town of Paisley which will be examined in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Paisley Attitudes towards Antebellum America

Chapter 4: Paisley Attitudes towards Antebellum America

The aim of this chapter is to provide a coherent basis for the examination of Paisley's complex response to the American Civil War, an analysis of which will follow. To do this, it is essential that we uncover the town's reaction to American political developments throughout the mid-nineteenth century period. This is important because it will demonstrate the continuous interest which was shown in America both before and during the Civil War, and it will help us to explain the background to some of the opinions expressed in Paisley during the War. In addition, we need to pay some attention to the very nature of Paisley itself: the type of town it was, the attitudes which were commonly held, and the origins of these attitudes. This will help us to formulate the type of local identity which existed in Paisley in the mid-nineteenth century, and the extent to which this local identity was instrumental in the formulation of Civil War attitudes. In her vigorous advocacy of the historical study of localities, Macdonald argued that local identity is crucial to our understanding of historical change. Local identity, she suggested, exists where 'space' and 'time' intersect, and is formed as a result of the combination of social, economic, political, and cultural factors.[1] In the context of Paisley, Macdonald suggested that the town's identity evolved as a result of a number of influences: its relationship with Glasgow, its industrial identity, and its sense of radical identity.[2] We will see later how these three factors served to influence Paisley's attitudes towards the American Civil War, and consequently, how these attitudes were part of Paisley's perception of itself.

In the nineteenth century, the town of Paisley was well known for its radicalism, a political creed which led to active support for political reform before and after the 1832

[1] Macdonald, 'The Vanduaria of Ptolemy', p. 179.
[2] Macdonald, 'The Vanduaria of Ptolemy', pp. 180-90.

Reform Act, and support for the anti-Corn Law movement and Chartism.[3] Leitch suggested that the roots of this radicalism lay in the late eighteenth century, following the French Revolution,[4] and both Leitch, and Clarke and Dickson, stressed the important position which the Paisley weavers held in fostering radicalism.[5] It is the intention of this section to examine attitudes in Paisley towards America, using the town's radical politics as a backdrop. It will be shown that during political campaigns for franchise extensions, America's experience was frequently drawn upon; that calls for the restriction of the size of central government in the 1840s drew upon the American system; and that the issue of slavery served as much to limit the effectiveness of the reformers' arguments about the benefits of American democracy, as it did to provoke interest amongst those sympathetic to the abolitionist cause. It will also illustrate the continuing interest which Paisley exhibited in America, a land to which many of the radical agitators had left for following the 1819-20 uprisings, as well as the many unemployed weavers who had emigrated to America throughout the nineteenth century.[6] This section, in establishing the relationship between Paisley politics and American political ideas and experience in the pre-Civil War period, will help to explain the reaction of Paisley to the American Civil War.[7] Extensive use has been made of the Paisley Pamphlets collection, a source which includes a great deal of information about nineteenth century Paisley life.[8] The

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3 Leitch, A. 'Radicalism in Paisley, 1830-48: Its Economic, Political and Cultural Background', Unpublished M.Litt Thesis, University of Glasgow, 1993; McGuire, J. 'Chartism in the Paisley Area', Unpublished Undergraduate Thesis, University of Strathclyde, 1974.

4 Leitch, 'Radicalism in Paisley', p. 31.

5 Leitch, 'Radicalism in Paisley', p.240; Clarke & Dickson, 'Class and Class Consciousness', pp. 19-23.

6 Clark, Paisley, pp. 61-64, p. 120.

7 A number of sources have been drawn upon in this section, particularly the already mentioned works of Leitch, and Clarke and Dickson, and also Smout, T.C. 'The Strange Intervention of Edward Twistleton: Paisley in Depression, 1841-3'. In The Search for Wealth and Stability, pp. 218-42. Edited by T.C. Smout. London, 1979. In addition, the main history texts of Paisley have been consulted: Brown, History of Paisley; Metcalfe, History of Paisley; Black, Story of Paisley.

8 The Paisley Pamphlets, P.C. 278-297, vols. 19-38.

Pamphlets consist of religious tracts, poetry, fiction, poster-advertisements, and occasional political and economic opinion. The local newspapers have provided the bulk of the information in this section. At times frustrating, and at other times extremely fruitful, the Paisley press offer a perspective on this period which no other source can, and will show the considerable importance which America played in intellectual discussion in Paisley.

Paisley was home to five newspapers during this period: the Paisley Advertiser (1844-50), the Paisley Herald (1853-83), the Paisley Journal (1853-57), the Glasgow Saturday Post and Paisley and Renfrewshire Reformer (1827-1875), and the Renfrewshire Independent (1857-98). The Paisley Advertiser was established in 1824, but its proprietor is unknown.[9] Its first editor was James Goldie, who took "a medium course in politics,"[10] until his replacement in 1826 by William Kennedy, who gave the paper a Tory line.[11] William Motherwell took over in 1828, and continued Kennedy's line for commercial reasons, according to Cowan.[12] His replacement in 1830, Robert Hay, took a more moderate position, and was editor and joint proprietor until the paper became the Renfrewshire Advertiser in 1844. Its first editor, Andrew Bell, lasted only two months, and was succeeded by William Wallace Fyfe until 1846. Cowan described how "under both Fyfe and his successor, William Wilson (editor 1846-50), the Renfrewshire Advertiser had a certain independence of view."[13] The paper ended in 1850, following a takeover by the Glasgow Constitutional. The Paisley Herald began in 1853, following three years during which Paisley had no newspaper, and it was owned and edited by Richard Watson. The paper espoused the Liberal cause and was a strong supporter of the town's M.P. Alexander Hastie. The Paisley Journal also began life in 1853, and was

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[9] Cowan, The Newspaper in Scotland, p. 45.
[10] Brown, History of Paisley, vol. II, p. 214.
[11] Cowan, The Newspaper in Scotland, p. 45.
[12] Cowan, The Newspaper in Scotland, p. 45.
[13] Cowan, The Newspaper in Scotland, p. 158.

conducted by James Waterston, who was an associate of Robert Hay, formerly of the Paisley Advertiser, according to Brown.[14] The paper attempted a radical position, but Cowan described how it "lacked direction."[15] For real radicalism, Paisley looked to the Glasgow Saturday Post, which Metcalfe described as "ultra-Radical in politics."[16] Its editor was John Henderson, a Quaker cutler by trade, who had been accused of supplying weapons to the Paisley radicals in 1820, and was Provost of Paisley from 1841 to 1844. Smout described how the paper "strongly reflected his views as a Liberal, an Anti-Corn Law Leaguer and advocate of the Complete Suffrage Association."[17] The Renfrewshire Independent was established in 1856 by the owner of the Paisley Journal, James Waterston, who ran the paper as a liberal concern. It can be seen, therefore, that as the period progressed the newspaper press of Paisley became much more liberal, with the disappearance of the Tory Paisley Advertiser. This is a commercial reflection of Paisley's growing liberalism during the nineteenth century.

Paisley Attitudes towards the Role of Central Government in Britain and America

During the mid-nineteenth century the doctrine of *laissez-faire* was widely espoused, with the role of central government a keen subject for debate. Free-traders, on one side, believed that the role of government was to detach itself from economic affairs; while radicals also expressed concern about the increasing size and expense of the central government machine. On the other side of the argument, however, concerns were voiced about social welfare, especially during periods of economic hardship, when debate raged about the responsibilities which central government had in alleviating distress. This issue was relevant to the American experience too, where President Jackson (1828-36)

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[14] Brown, History of Paisley, vol.II, p. 418.
[15] Cowan, The Newspaper in Scotland, p. 304.
[16] Metcalfe, History of Paisley, p. 423.
[17] Smout, 'Paisley in Depression', p. 223.

advocated limited government, especially with regard to its encroachment on state sovereignty. The conflicts inherent in this theory were present in America, too, with Jackson's imposition of federal authority upon South Carolina during the Nullification Crisis. The issue came to the fore in Paisley during the trade depression of 1841 to 1843, during which the town was economically devastated. The inadequacies of the Poor Law led to pressure on central government to provide assistance to Paisley. The drama that followed illustrated perfectly the dilemma which the government faced. Smout described how the episode centred upon "the subterfuges of Sir Robert Peel's administration, simultaneously drawn by a mixture of humanity and fear to intervene in a local crisis, yet repelled from doing so openly by foreboding about the precedents it would set for central-government action."[18] In order to assess the situation, Edward Twistleton, the Assistant Poor Law Commissioner for England, was sent to Paisley in 1842. He came with money donated by Queen Victoria and certain members of the government, as private individuals, which would be given to Paisley under several strict conditions. The government believed that it had successfully managed the situation, with Smout describing how the theory was that "Peel and Graham [the Home Secretary] were interfering but the State was not interfering: the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary were laying down exactly how relief should be administered . . . , but they were not committing the government itself to any action or to providing any money."[19] Smout went on to describe how the people of Paisley saw the situation differently: "to them it was gross Government interference without the clear promise of effective relief."[20] This episode illustrated two things. Firstly, it demonstrated the dilemma faced by the government, and its attempts to offer assistance without it appearing that it was now central government's duty to do so. It also proved how suspicious Paisley was about central government interference in local affairs.

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[18] Smout, 'Paisley in Depression', p. 218.

[19] Smout, 'Paisley in Depression', pp. 232-3.

[20] Smout, 'Paisley in Depression', p. 233.

In 1848, criticism arose in Paisley about the growth of central government, a debate which led to favourable depictions of the American federal government. The debate was triggered by the establishment of the French Second Republic in that year. A meeting was held in the Old Low Church, Paisley, on 28th February, "for the purpose of adopting an address to the people of France, congratulating them upon the achievement of the late revolution."[21] The meeting gave rise to a discussion of monarchy and republicanism, and the cost of the British monarchy. Robert Cochran, a well-known radical Paisley weaver, made a direct contrast between Britain and America:

> Fancy what we could do in this country if we had a republican government. We see in the United States of America a man presiding over that great country at a salary of £6000 a-year; whereas our Queen Victoria gets her hundreds of thousands a-year. ... It would not be doing an act of injustice were we to curtail the expenditure to the usual sum to the President of the United States of America.[22]

In 1848, a number of Financial Reform movements were established as a reaction against increases in income tax and perceived financial mismanagement.[23] Paisley was one of the towns which saw the formation of a Financial Reform Association, which, according to McGuire, "was to have a relatively long life in comparison to the transient organisations of the Chartist period."[24] Its object was two-fold: "first, to secure the most rigid economy in matters of public expenditure, and, second, to promote the adoption of a simple and equitable system of taxation, fairly levied upon property and income."[25] Again, the growing cost of central government and the unfair way in which it was financed was causing concern. At the first meeting of the Association on 28th November 1848, the cost of

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[21] The Renfrewshire Advertiser, 4.3.48.

[22] The Renfrewshire Advertiser, 4.3.48; for more information about the prominent radical, Robert Cochran, see McGuire, 'Chartism in Paisley', pp. 97-8, 108, 110.

[23] For a discussion about the national Financial Reform movement, see Searle, G.E. Entrepreneurial Politics in Mid-Victorian Britain. Oxford, 1993, pp. 51-88.

[24] McGuire, 'Chartism in Paisley', p. 107.

[25] The Renfrewshire Advertiser, 2.12.48.

the monarchy again drew comment: "The coachmen, postilions, and footmen of the Queen, alone cost £12,563 per annum, or within £4,000 of the entire cost of the Executive Government of the United States! The eight Lords in waiting alone receive a sum more than the annual salary of the President of the American Republic!"[26] Consistently we can see how often the American experience was drawn upon by Paisley radicals.

Further illustration of the growing concern in Paisley at the centralising tendency of government was expressed in 1851, following the introduction of the Prisons Bill in Parliament, which was designed to take power away from local areas and give it to the General Board in Edinburgh. The Glasgow Saturday Post declared that:

> the centralising system, which, unhappily, has already made extensive progress in this country, is now bringing forth its fruits in such abundance, that the eyes of many, hitherto blind to its evils, are at last getting opened to them. We trust these discoveries will rapidly increase, and that the feeling induced by them will become so strong as to present a barrier to the further extension of the system.[27]

Of most interest is the Saturday Post's opinion regarding the prospects for local control of administration: "local interests and rights will be disregarded, and local knowledge and facility will remain unimproved for the purposes of economy and efficiency."[28] This clearly illustrates the feeling that existed in support of localised government and decision making in Paisley. Paisley's concern about the growing size of central government reflected concern across Britain as a whole, where the *laissez-faire* mentality was rapidly spreading. As we have seen, this was manifested in concern in Paisley about the relinquishment of local autonomy and opposition to the growing cost of central government in Britain. This latter argument went further than a mere concern for financial prudence, however. Occurring in 1848, as a direct response to the Second French Republic, it echoed radical arguments of the early 1830s which used the issue of governmental economy to

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26 The Renfrewshire Advertiser, 2.12.48.
27 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 19.4.51.
28 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 19.4.51.

advocate democratic reform. In 1848, the monarchy was the particular target of the Paisley radicals, who pointed to America's republican system as greatly superior. They argued that taxes were being used to finance privilege, an argument which, again, had parallels in the 1830s. Lillibridge argues that then:

> the democratic idea ... was that of equality, and the reality was that of aristocratic living at the expense of the poor. It was therefore inevitable that a part of the democratic movement in England [sic] strove for economy because expensive government was at the time directly associated with an antidemocratic society.[29]

In theory this support for localised government might suggest that Paisley was sympathetic to the concept of states' rights in America. Unfortunately, the connection was not appreciated in this sense. Generally, most concern was voiced about the weakness of the central government in America; not in terms of the right of states to determine their own affairs, but with regard to the effect of federalism on international relations and on law and order. In the case of the former, the Paisley Advertiser questioned the nature of federalism following the McLeod Incident, which, as we have seen, witnessed the Federal Government unable to intervene in New York State's arrest of Alexander McLeod, and asked:

> if each state have the power thus to deal with other nations, independent of the general government, what can be the use of the general government, or with whom must other nations treat on any subject of difference that may arise? This doctrine, of the independence of each state, in matters with which foreign powers are concerned, is altogether untenable.[30]

In 1844, the Glasgow Saturday Post was concerned about the rioting in Philadelphia, during which Catholic churches were burned and several Catholics killed, but declared that the riots "prove that the arm of the executive power in the United States is too

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[29] Lillibridge, Beacon of Freedom, p. 17.

[30] The Paisley Advertiser, 13.2.41.

weak."[31] We can see that there were doubts expressed in Paisley about the feasibility of federalism in America, but on the whole these doubts were concerned with the apparent weakness of the federal government than with the rights of states. With limited understanding of the American political system, events tended to overwhelmingly dictate the newspapers' attitudes towards American political institutions and practices. At this stage in the nineteenth century, the question of states' rights was not sufficiently apparent to Paisley commentators, and the subject did not consequently arise in their discussions.

Paisley Attitudes towards American Democracy and Its Influence on Reform in Britain

The extent of the political radicalism in Paisley during the nineteenth century can be appreciated by the fact that the issue of democracy was constantly under discussion, both in its domestic context and in the American context. There was little opposition to democratic reform in Paisley, and consequently any criticism of American democracy tended to arise out of cautious concern rather than a concerted effort to undermine attempts at democratic reform in Britain. This widespread support for democratic reform had its roots in a political and class consensus, which existed in nineteenth century Paisley, according to Clarke and Dickson. They found that this consensus originated in the close association of the weaver class with the manufacturing class.[32] The political culture of Paisley and its support for radical policies is well documented, with Paisley an active supporter of political reform and Chartism, and with the establishment of the Paisley Parliamentary and Financial Reform Association in 1849.[33] It will be shown that most support for American democracy was expressed by radicals such as Robert Cochran, and by newspapers such as the Glasgow Saturday Post. For more moderate Liberals, the nature of

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31 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 17.8.44.

32 Clarke & Dickson, 'Social Concern and Social Control', pp. 55-6.

33 Leitch, 'Radicalism in Paisley'; Brown, History of Paisley, vol.II, pp. 169-217, pp. 424-6; Black, History of Paisley, pp.177-93; Clarke & Dickson, 'Class and Class Consciousness', pp. 37-51; McGuire, 'Chartism in Paisley'.

the American system provoked alarm when faced with riots, ballot frauds, republicanism and territorial aggrandisement. This section will examine the way in which three political groupings in Paisley assessed the American system of government and used it to promote their own beliefs: the Tories, moderate-Liberals, and Radicals.

Smout pointed out that "the Liberal radicals were not . . . the only political presence in Paisley," although he stressed that the Tory Sheriff Depute and the Sheriff Substitute in the 1840s were government appointees.[34] Nevertheless, this does illustrate that a Tory presence was in existence, especially until 1853 when only a Tory newspaper was published in Paisley. Until its name-change in 1844, the Paisley Advertiser was critical of American democracy and painstakingly pointed out its failures compared with Britain. While the paper had become very Conservative and anti-reformist under previous editors, Robert Hay steered a more moderate course, but the paper was still evidently suspicious of democracy. Following reports in October 1840, that British gold had been used as bribes in the run up to the American presidential election, the paper called on reformers to learn from the American experience of democracy: "The liberty and equality, the freedom, prosperity, and peace of democratic republics, are not after all so very enviable, and it almost universally happens, that the bawlers for democracy in this country, when they witness its workings in America, get completely cured of their delusions."[35] The expression "bawlers for democracy" gives us some indication of the way the Advertiser felt about local radicals, and clearly the paper was keen to unearth all the negative aspects of American democracy in order to influence the move towards democratisation in Britain. The paper's dismissal of American liberty is in line with that taken by British Conservatives in general, who, as Lillibridge described, equated democracy with tyranny:

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[34] Smout, 'Paisley in Depression', p. 224.

[35] The Paisley Advertiser, 24.10.40.

> the conclusion seemed to be simple to the conservative [sic] mind: there was greater freedom and truer liberty in Britain under a restricted suffrage than in America under universal suffrage because the tyrannical pressure of a majority cramping the freedom of thought and action of individuals was absent from the British scene.[36]

The transformation of the Paisley Advertiser into the Renfrewshire Advertiser was an interesting one, as its views underwent a less than consistent transformation. Prior to this change, the paper had suffered commercially as the Glasgow Saturday Post increased its readership, resulting in it having almost the highest circulation in Scotland in 1844.[37] The Advertiser knew it had to address its losses, and decided to extend its province to include Renfrewshire. Cowan suggested that the Advertiser was trying to appeal to the working class, a group which overwhelmingly read the Saturday Post.[38] The Advertiser called itself "the only Conservative paper in the shire"[39] and remained critical of some aspects of American democracy, but it also supported the extension of the suffrage,[40] and the Paisley Parliamentary Reform Association.[41] From this it appears that the paper was grudgingly accepting a reform position in order to regain its readership, while continuing to criticise certain aspects of American politics. Its main criticism was expressed through its Greenock editorial and focused on the inability of a republic to elect a good leader, a familiar line taken by Conservatives in the nineteenth century.[42]

The Paisley Herald offers us a perspective upon moderate Liberal opinion in Paisley. The paper was in favour of political reform in Britain but was unimpressed by what it saw as the extremes of American republicanism. From an examination of the Herald's pages, it appears that American experience was used to substantiate the paper's views on the domestic situation. For example, in 1854, the Herald responded to Lord

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36 Lillibridge, Beacon of Freedom, p. 90.
37 Cowan, The Newspaper in Scotland, p. 215.
38 Cowan, The Newspaper in Scotland, p. 214.
39 Cowan, The Newspaper in Scotland, p. 214.
40 The Renfrewshire Advertiser, 15.7.48.
41 Cowan, The Newspaper in Scotland, p. 159.
42 The Renfrewshire Advertiser, 30.9.48.

Palmerston's support for open voting, by praising the ballot in America: "in the United States, where secret voting is allowed, men have the honesty and manliness to show their political bias by going to the poll with their tickets in their hats and displaying the colours of their favourite candidates."[43] Here, the paper was countering the assertion of the Prime Minister that the ballot would lower men's moral status, and instead was illustrating that the ballot, while allowing secrecy, did not involve cowardice. Most of the concern which the Herald expressed about America concerned evidence of 'mob-rule': "there is no country where such violent attempts are constantly being made of Lynch Law, mobbing, tarring and feathering, bowie knives and revolvers, to prevent the expression of opinion, and to bear down opposition by physical means."[44] This type of comment was a familiar one, although it was usually expressed by Conservatives in the nineteenth century. When this view was advocated by a Liberal paper such as the Herald, it most likely represented concern about the possible dangers of excessive democratisation. This concern also existed amongst members of the liberal business class in Britain as a whole. Lillibridge comments that this group also offered only cautious support for the ballot.[45] In addition, the Herald's stance symbolised concern that the faults of American democracy could have a retarding influence upon British democratic reform. For example, the Herald argued that the above faults of the American system:

> may not be the fault of its republican institutions, but, being found so closely in connection with them, it will operate upon certain minds as if it was; and if our transatlantic friends desire, therefore, that their principles of government should become more popular in other countries, it would be wise if they would individually, and in the mass, exhibit more marked manifestations of their civilising influence.[46]

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[43] The Paisley Herald, 17.6.54.

[44] The Paisley Herald, 29.7.54.

[45] Lillibridge, Beacon of Freedom, p. 20.

[46] The Paisley Herald, 29.7.54.

Another example of the Herald's tendency to shape its view of America according to events elsewhere was apparent in 1855, following America's alleged friendliness to Russia during the Crimean War. The Herald saw direct comparisons between:

> the two powers which may lead the republicans to desire to stand well with the Autocrat. They have both the same inclination to prey upon their weaker neighbours, and so long as America retains that and other characteristics of barbarism, she can never, in the true sense of the phrase, be either 'great, glorious, or free.'[47]

It was clearly great sport during the nineteenth century to attack America and its institutions. The evidence from the Paisley Herald seems to confirm that America provided a useful source through which to corroborate opinions on a number of issues. When the paper wanted to lambast anti-reformers, America was an example of good government; but when the paper was nervous about the dangers of reform, the faults of the American system were expressed.

For examples of Paisley radicalism during the nineteenth century, we have the Glasgow Saturday Post and the various reform movements that existed during this period.[48] It was here that most pro-American feeling was expressed, usually to support calls for political reform. The importance which the Paisley reformers placed on the American system of government is obvious as far back as the eighteenth century, when the reformers looked to the American Constitution for inspiration.[49] In 1831, during the run-up to the 1832 Reform Act, reform meetings were held in Paisley, during which American democracy was praised. At a public meeting in favour of reform at the Justiciary Court Hall on 7th May 1831, Mr A. Mitchell responded to Sir Robert Peel's comment that the state of the public mind was a fever. He retorted, "if it was so, it was a fever of a very extraordinary kind, for it had been lodged in the constitution upwards of 50 years, ever

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47 The Paisley Herald, 30.6.55.

48 See Leitch, 'Radicalism in Paisley', passim.

49 Clark, Paisley, p. 42.

indeed since America had stood forth to resist taxation without representation."[50] According to radicals in Paisley, the democratic experiment had begun with the American Constitution and the French Revolution. This was echoed at a reform meeting at Lochwinnoch, when Mr McDowal stated that "our oligarchy was not content with keeping down the rising liberties of our own country, but with their fleets and their armies they husted it down whenever it raised its head - as a proof they might witness the rising liberties of America and the rising liberties of France."[51]

The Glasgow Saturday Post also supported the American republic, pausing only to criticise the operation of the Senate, which the paper felt was even worse than the House of Lords, due to its confrontations with the President and the House of Representatives over the Bank Crisis.[52] The paper condemned those who used the United States as a reason for opposing reform in Britain, claiming that it was not democracy that was at fault, but the aristocracy of the Southern States in upholding slavery.[53] In 1856, following the House of Representatives' failure to elect a speaker, it repeated its view that there was no reason to halt political reform in Britain as a result of America's experience:

> some may seize the occasion for sneering at representative institutions in general as leaving too much in the discretion of impracticable and hotheaded demagogues. Let no friend of constitutional liberty, however, be disheartened or abashed at such exceptional eccentricities in the development of the political creed which he has chosen. It was never supposed that a constitutional form of government had any claims to perfection more than anything else that is of human origin, and must be wrought out by imperfect agents.[54]

Praise for the United States was consistent throughout the mid-nineteenth century period, particularly when used to promote reform in Britain. In November 1840, the Post countered those who dwelled on the faults of American democracy:

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[50] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 7.5.31.
[51] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 28.5.31.
[52] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 28.5.31.
[53] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 29.8.35.
[54] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 12.1.56.

> the Conservative papers of every shade are quoting with avidity from their American contemporaries of the same stamp, instances of fraud and irregularity in the practice of universal suffrage and the ballot; but let them search the Union over and over, and we challenge them to produce instances of anything to surpass the drunkenness, the bribery, and servility, manifested by the British ten pounders.[55]

Throughout the period under review the Post continued to praise America for the freedom it offered to workers, its superiority over monarchical government, and its treatment of diverse religious groups.[56] Paisley radicals were evidently keen to use the example of American democracy to support their arguments for political reform in Britain throughout the nineteenth century. They countered claims from Conservatives and some Liberals that American democracy proved that extensive democratic reform in Britain was inadvisable. They also pointed to the positive benefits of American democracy for the working classes. Lillibridge illustrated that the radical obsession with America was widespread throughout Britain during the mid-nineteenth century, and that until the Reform Act of 1867, "reform guided by the American experience was still the radical objective."[57]

The general attitude of all Paisley commentators, whether Conservative, Liberal, or Radical, was consistent. America served overwhelmingly to reinforce the opinions of these groups: Conservatives pointed to the failures in America as evidence that mass democracy did not work; moderate liberals expressed caution about the speed of democratic reform in Britain, wary of some of the extreme results apparent in America; and radicals used the United States to illustrate the benefits which would accrue to the working classes as a result of living under such a government. The fact that America was used as an example, for good and ill, rather than the French republican government, especially after 1848, shows the important place which America held in the Paisley psyche. Many Paisley citizens had friends and relatives who had emigrated to America; Paisley had

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55 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 14.11.40.

56 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 14.8.41, 1.1.48, 1.1.42, 7.1.54.

57 Lillibridge, Beacon of Freedom, p. 85.

important economic links with the United States, through its cotton trade; and America was the place to which those implicated in the 1819 to 1820 radical uprisings had fled. It was natural that it was the American experience of democracy that would be called upon during the Paisley debates upon democratic reform in Britain.

Paisley Attitudes towards American Slavery

The feelings engendered in Paisley towards slavery in America need to be examined in two stages, as there were two main ways in which the issue was tackled in the town. The first approach will analyse the history of abolitionist feeling in Paisley, and attitudes expressed about American slavery throughout the nineteenth century. The second approach will look at the way in which slavery was used by anti-reformers to denigrate American democracy, a tactic which served as one of the main stumbling blocks which reformers had to face in depicting America as the land of freedom and equality.

The abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1833 served two purposes for the future debate: firstly, it focused attention upon the issue of slavery and abolition; and secondly, those who had campaigned for an end to British slavery now could focus their attention on the American case. Paisley was home to an Emancipation Society, and the renowned Paisley minister, Patrick Brewster, was an active supporter of abolition.[58] Calls for abolition were expressed through religious tracts and public meetings. In one of the former in 1836, Brewster called for America to abolish its slavery institution and bemoaned "perjured, blood-guilty America, where liberty is immolated upon her own altar, where the groan of the slave mingles with the shout of the free."[59] Brewster recognised the freedom which American democracy provided but was adamant that opposition to slavery would be voiced, even though there was a strong abolitionist

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58 Clark, Paisley, p. 91.

59 Brewster, P. An Essay on Passive Obedience, as connected with the Principles of Christianity, The Rights of Subjects, and the Duties of Rulers, 2nd ed, Paisley, 1836. In Paisley Pamphlets P.C.279, (20) pp. 1-38, p. 35.

movement in America: "It is proper that America should know in what light her pro-slavery practices are viewed in other quarters. We would not have our liberal journals to modify or mitigate, by one syllable, their expressions of reprobation."[60] In 1837, a meeting of the Paisley Emancipation Society was held in the Renfrewshire Tontine Inn, Paisley on 25th January, in honour of George Thompson, the prominent anti-slavery advocate. The chairman, Reverend Mr Boyd of the George St United Secession Church, praised Thompson for his attempts to:

> purify [America] from that cankerous abomination that is eating into the core of her national prosperity - and to tear up by the root, and scatter to the winds of heaven, that upas tree of slavery, which is blighting, by its influence, the administration of justice, the efficiency of Christian discipline, and dishonouring, by its existence, the American church, and senate, and people.[61]

The event which most aroused Paisley interest in slavery was the decision of the newly established Free Church of Scotland to accept donations from southern slaveholders on a fundraising tour to the United States. In 1846, a number of meetings were held in Paisley on this subject, with visiting speakers such as Frederick Douglass, the famous ex-slave and abolitionist campaigner, addressing such meetings.[62] At a public meeting in the Paisley West Relief Church, which was called to discuss the issue of the Free Church and American Slavery, George Thompson read the following resolution:

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60 Brewster, Passive Obedience, p. 36.

61 The Speeches delivered at the Soiree in honour of George Thompson, Esq. ... with an Appendix Containing a Remonstrance on the Subject of Slavery, by the Paisley Emancipation Society. In Paisley Pamphlets P.C.281, (22) pp. 611-24, p. 613.

62 For a comprehensive account of these meetings, see Paisley Pamphlets P.C.289 (30) pp.257-97, pp. 519-26. For more information on the visits of Douglass to Scotland, see Shepperson, G. 'Frederick Douglass and Scotland', The Journal of Negro History 38 (1953), 307-21.

> That, regarding slavery as essentially sinful, and its practice under all circumstances as contrary to the commands of God and the spirit of the gospel, we are of opinion that there should be no Christian fellowship with slaveholders, and that it is derogatory to the principles, and insulting to the character of Christianity to derive any pecuniary assistance from the gains of so guilty a system, knowing the source from which such gains have been obtained; and that, therefore, the Free Church of Scotland ought to send back the money obtained from the slaveholders of the United States.[63]

The Free Church did not accept such criticism, however, and was eager to respond. At the South Church Soiree in April, 1846, Reverend J. Macnaughton, a Free Church minister, argued that the Free Church had regularly spoken against slavery and that during the fundraising tour of America, the Church had come to the conclusion that:

> as their mission was to preach wherever they had opportunity - to explain their cause, and accept of any assistance what should be proffered - they might, without any sacrifice or compromise of principle, *visit all the states*, and testify to *all men* of the glorious gospel of the grace of God.[64]

In addition, Macnaughton minimised the significance of the slaveholders' contribution, claiming that "a larger part was the contribution of Scotchmen who had emigrated to these States . . . it is more than likely slaveholders did contribute; but as these form a small fraction of Church members, their contribution would not be very considerable."[65]

In only two other senses was slavery criticised for its own sake, rather than with the ulterior motive of attacking American democracy. The first was the Glasgow Saturday Post's attacks on the institution: the first came in 1835, when it stated that "a long period must elapse before such a stain as this can be wiped from the character of the American Government which has permitted it,"[66] and again in 1844 when it maintained that "in no part of the habitable globe where slavery has been known to exist, has it ever

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63 Paisley Pamphlets P.C.289 (30), pp. 283-97, p. 296.

64 The Free Church and American Slavery: Slanders Against the Free Church Met and Answered in a Speech delivered by The Rev. J. Macnaughton, at the South Church Soiree, Paisley, Paisley, 1846. In Paisley Pamphlets P.C.289 (30), pp. 519-26, p. 522.

65 Slanders Met and Answered, p. 522.

66 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 19.12.35.

assumed so brutal and debasing a form as in the American States."[67] The second sense in which slavery was attacked in Paisley was as a result of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, which permitted slaveholders to enter free states to capture escaped slaves, with full federal authority. The outrage which this law aroused in Paisley was immense, leading to public meetings and newspaper comment. This outrage is striking, when one considers how theoretical such issues must have been to many attending the meetings. The Glasgow Saturday Post was dismayed to have to state that "after the adoption of such an enactment as this by a republican nation in the year 1850, we are compelled to blush for republicanism."[68] The Post was so appalled by the Fugitive Slave Law that it queried how universal suffrage could lead to such a law:

> in the State of New York universal suffrage is the electoral law for the appointment of every official in authority, from the federal president, downwards, to their municipal rulers; yet here we have an instance where these free citizens who boast so much of their privileges, permit a fellow creature, guilty of no moral offence, and only distinguished from themselves by the darkness of his colour, to be kidnapped, and hauled back to perpetual bondage, there to be retained as only equal to the lowest class of animals.[69]

On 7th January, 1851, a meeting took place at the U.P. Church, Abbey Close, Paisley, where three fugitive slaves, William Wells Brown, William Craft, and Ellen Craft, spoke. Following their speeches, Dr Baird refuted the argument that the United States, as a whole, was not responsible for slavery:

> there was a great deal of sophism in that argument. The Fugitive Slave Bill puts an end to that sophism and that argument and identifies every man and woman in the United States with slavery. Every State is now implicated in its support, and the system is protected with pains and penalties enforced by the authority of the National Congress.[70]

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[67] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 20.7.44.
[68] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 14.9.50.
[69] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 19.10.50.
[70] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 11.1.51.

This argument was especially important because it identified the roots of Scottish abolitionist hostility towards the Northern States as well as the Southern States. We will see in the analysis of Paisley's reaction to the American Civil War, that much anti-Northern feeling originated in doubts about the North's sincerity over the slavery issue. Dr Baird then proposed the following resolution: "That this meeting cordially welcome to this country William Wells Brown, William and Ellen Craft and that they raise their indignant protest against that iniquitous enactment, the Fugitive Slave Bill, lately passed by the American Congress."[71] In response to the meeting the Glasgow Saturday Post repeated its disappointment that a republican state could be home to slavery. Further, the paper commented that the aristocratic injustices present in Great Britain were minor compared with the existence of slavery in America.[72]

Most Paisley criticism of American slavery focused upon the contradiction of democracy existing alongside slavery. The majority of the condemnation came from those opposed to political reform in Britain. As early as 1837 the Paisley Advertiser suggested that slavery would lead to the break-up of the American Union, when it described slavery as "an element in American Society quite enough to moderate the expectations of those who anticipate the permanence of the Federal Union."[73] The Renfrewshire Advertiser continued this line in 1849 when it commented that slavery "threatens to be the rock on which the Union will be shattered, for no man expects that the majority of Southern planters will prefer the maintenance of the Union to the maintenance of slavery."[74] The Conservative Advertiser was quick to use the issue of slavery to condemn the so-called freedom of the United States:

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[71] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 11.1.51.
[72] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 11.1.51.
[73] The Paisley Advertiser, 15.4.37.
[74] The Renfrewshire Advertiser, 13.1.49.

> while proclaiming to the world that there, and there alone, pure and genuine liberty was to be found; ... while claiming for themselves the admiration of the world towards their free, liberal, and enlightened institutions; whilst arrogating to their nation the most presumptuous claims to superior civilisation; ... they have been inflicting upon millions of their fellow-beings a servitude the most galling, degrading, and demoralising, which could well be conceived.[75]

The striking contradiction of freedom and slavery co-existing was a constant criticism of Conservatives. Other non-Conservative papers in Paisley did not tend to comment upon this contradiction. The Glasgow Saturday Post refuted the contradiction, however, stating that:

> the enemies of popular rights throughout Europe are rejoicing over the aspect in which North American Society now appears to the world; but their triumph is altogether without foundation. The degrading spectacle which the United States now present, is not the result of their free institutions; it springs entirely from an attempt on the part of the Southern slave owners to monopolise the benefits of freedom to themselves.[76]

When analysing the reaction of Paisley towards slavery one must be careful not to overestimate the sophistication of the populace with respect to issues of race. Clark mentioned the way in which drama was often used to put forward a political message, and drew attention to the popularity of concerts containing plantation music. She stated that "the intention was good, although in livening up the programme with comic crosstalk these shows came to give an undignified image of black men which got worse when white men put on burnt cork and parodied supposed 'nigger' behaviour."[77] This tendency was seen during a touring production in 1840 which performed at the Exchange Rooms Theatre in Paisley. The show starred an American comedian, Mr E. Harper, "who is pronounced by the London and Provincial Press, to be the best representative of the American Plantation Nigger, ever witnessed on the British stage."[78] The popularity of Mr Harper in Paisley

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75 The Renfrewshire Advertiser, 13.1.49.

76 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 29.8.35.

77 Clark, Paisley, p. 158.

78 Advertisement Poster, Paisley Pamphlets P.C. 284 (25).

can be judged from the fact that the advertisement stated that this was the fourth time he had appeared in the town. The attitude in Paisley towards American slavery does, however, illustrate a number of points. Firstly, it shows that there was a great deal of support for the abolitionist campaign in the town, and much support for the 'Send Back the Money' campaign. The amount of interest caused by the Fugitive Slave Law also illustrates the support which the anti-slavery movement enjoyed in Paisley. This law had no implications for life in Britain, either politically or economically, so there was no self-interest at play here. The opposition was therefore expressed for its own sake, the rights of the slave was the only consideration. Secondly, we have seen the way in which the slavery issue was employed against the campaign for democracy in Britain, with claims that the American republic would not survive with slavery at its heart, therefore proving the unsustainability of American democracy.

Conclusion

As an important centre of Scottish radicalism, the town of Paisley offers us a valuable perspective upon the way in which the American system of government influenced Scottish intellectual debates about democracy and political reform. Paisley is also of particular interest to us because of the strong American links which the town forged in the nineteenth century, as we have already discussed. The striking thing to arise out of this discussion was the fact that Paisley sustained an interest in America throughout the nineteenth century; an interest which existed for its own sake as well as to influence political debate at home. We have seen that the American political experience was drawn upon by both sides in the argument over British electoral reform, and that the radicals, dissatisfied with the growth of British central government in the 1840s, used the United States as an example of frugal government. Slavery was one issue which was discussed for its own sake, with genuine concern for the slave the primary motive. Perhaps

an indication of Paisley's attitude towards the abolitionist cause can be seen by the fact that an escaped American slave, Peter Burnet, had chosen the town as his refuge in the 1780s, and continued to live there his whole life.[79] The issue of slavery also served another purpose, however. Conservatives used the issue as a means of criticising American democracy, where political freedom paradoxically existed alongside racial servitude.

This section offers us a perspective for examining the opinions expressed in Paisley about the American Civil War. We have seen the way in which America was viewed in the town, as well as the many uses to which the American experience was turned for domestic purposes. The Civil War marked a culmination of the debates which raged throughout the antebellum period and in many ways witnessed the consolidation of the debate. The War also made Paisley commentators confront issues such as states' rights, issues which had been relevant in the antebellum period, but were not picked up by the papers. We will see how Paisley attitudes towards the Civil War in many ways mirrored those opinions expressed in the antebellum period, with supporters of political reform in Britain more willing to sympathise with the Northern States, while Conservatives and moderate Liberals supported the South's claims for independence. It will be shown that attitudes towards political reform at home overwhelmingly contributed to such opinions, much more so than attitudes about slavery, national self-determination or the adverse effects of the War on local industry.

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79 Parkhill, J. Sketch of the Life of Peter Burnet. Paisley, 1841. In Paisley Pamphlets P.C.285 (26) pp. 401-24.

This analysis of Dumfriesshire and Paisley reactions to American political developments in the antebellum period, has illustrated the importance both of taking this approach, and of examining this reaction on a local level. It has demonstrated a number of important points which will help to clarify the Scottish local reaction towards the American Civil War. We have already seen the reasons for approaching this topic from a local perspective: the need to avoid excessive generalisations about Scotland's reaction to overseas events; and the diverse opinions which can arise as a result of different towns' political and social cultures. This section has shown that both Dumfriesshire and Paisley were home to distinct political cultures which led them to take a significant interest in American events. Paisley exhibited a good deal of radical political activity which resulted in a positive interest in American political developments. Dumfriesshire was home to less political activity than Paisley, and had a stronger Conservative presence. Nevertheless, this did not prevent Dumfriessians from exhibiting a strong interest in America.

This section has also illustrated the continuity of certain political themes and serves to explain the appearance of certain inconsistencies. The prime example of this is the role which attitudes towards democratic reform in Britain played in the formulation of opinions on America. Throughout the antebellum period, radicals were the only group to express solid support for American democracy and political institutions. More moderate Liberals were cautious about the benefits and risks inherent in American democracy. They supported democratic reform in Britain, but when faced with political riots and frauds in America, seemed to hold back from supporting American democracy. Conservatives were solidly opposed to American democracy throughout the period. This illustrates the real value of this section. It is the contention here that attitudes towards democratic reform at home will become the most important factor in determining attitudes during the American

Civil War. Two examples illustrate this argument. Firstly, during the antebellum period, anti-reformers called for more power to be put in the hands of the American federal government at the expense of the individual states. During the Civil War, however, it will be shown that anti-reformers began to speak of the rights of the Southern States to formulate their own laws. These seemingly contradictory opinions can be reconciled by reference to the common theme of opposition to democracy. In the antebellum period, anti-reformers would criticise America in order to thwart attempts at reform in Britain. During the Civil War, a Northern victory was associated with a gain for democratic government, something that anti-reformers were loathe to anticipate. Secondly, the issue of slavery was used in a similar respect. Anti-reformers pointed to slavery as a reason not to support American institutions as it proved the failure of democracy. When the Slave States removed themselves from the American Union, however, anti-reformist feeling moved with them, rather than remaining with the democratic North. This contention does not deny the presence of other relevant factors in determining Civil War attitudes, but it does help to explain certain inconsistencies which will be further developed in the next section. The antebellum period, however, provides us with the background to some of the opinions expressed during the Civil War. The most notable example being the centrality of the debate about democracy, a prominent theme in this period.

Chapter 5: Scotland and the American Civil War

Chapter 5: Scotland and the American Civil War

The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of the effect of the American Civil War upon Scotland as a whole, and establish the context within which the subsequent chapters will be set. A number of studies have been made into the effect of the American Civil War upon Scotland, and have illustrated both the impact of the War, and Scottish reactions to it.[1] In terms of the effect of the War in Scotland, a major impact was felt, with the shipbuilding, jute, and woollen industries benefiting, while the War contributed to the decline of the West of Scotland cotton industry. In addition to these economic effects, the Civil War also stimulated a great deal of debate upon the issues of democracy and republicanism, issues which were of considerable interest to Scots in the mid-nineteenth century. Scottish attitudes towards the American Civil War were diverse and were the result of a number of determining factors. To some, the issue of slavery was the most important determinant, while to others, attitudes towards democratic reform, and the right of the Southern States to self-determination mattered most. We will see that party political groupings were not a gauge by which to measure Civil War attitudes, with splits occurring in both the Liberal party, the Conservative party, and even amongst trade unionists, with regard to their interpretations of the War. The events and attitudes described in this chapter will provide a brief account of Scotland's experience during the American Civil War, which was examined in much greater depth by Botsford. It will begin by examining the effect of the War in Scotland, and go on to explore the nature of Scottish reactions to the Civil War.

[1] Botsford, 'Civil War'; Finnie, 'Reconstruction'; Szasz, 'Civil War'.

The Effect of the American Civil War upon the Scottish Economy

a) The Civil War and Scotland's Textile Industries

In the mid-nineteenth century, the Scottish cotton industry relied heavily upon raw cotton imports from the Southern States of America, and the cotton shortage caused by the American Civil War was therefore bound to affect the industry. The industry relied upon American cotton right up until the outbreak of the Civil War, and this led to a conflict of interests, with slavery being criticised even though it benefited the Scottish economy. Given the importance of the cotton industry to the West of Scotland, however, moral arguments had to take second place, as there was little realistic prospect of this trading relationship between the Slave States and the Scottish cotton industry being voluntarily terminated. Of raw cotton imports coming into Britain, 75 per cent came from the United States in 1850, a figure which rose to 85 per cent in 1860, and cotton goods made up 40 per cent of British exports in 1850 and 1860.[2] These figures illustrate how important the Southern States were to the cotton trade in Britain, and the importance of the cotton industry to the British economy. The growing importance of the Scottish branch of the cotton industry during the nineteenth century can be illustrated by the fact that "between 1775 and 1812 imports of raw cotton into the Clyde went up from 137,160 lb. to 11,114,640 lb.", and that "by 1820 the United States of America were much the most important single source of this raw material."[3]

While the cotton industry of Scotland was not as important to the Scottish economy in 1861 as it had been in the 1840s and 1850s, as a result of the 1857 Financial Crisis, it still played a major role in the Scottish economy, with 163 factories employing 40,000 workers.[4] At the beginning of the War a glut of raw cotton supplies had built up

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2 Bagwell, P.S. and Mingay, G.E. Britain and America: A Study of Economic Change 1850-1939, London, 1970, p. 19, p. 21.

3 Lenman, B. An Economic History of Modern Scotland, London, 1977, p. 120.

4 Botsford, 'Civil War', Vol.1, p. 392.

following an earlier good cotton growing season, and Britain had 300 million pounds worth of manufactured cotton in storage.[5] The Cotton Famine did not take effect until the summer of 1862, when the Confederates actively withheld cotton supplies in the hope that shortages would force Britain and France to recognise the Confederacy. The Cotton Famine did persuade some Scots, such as Alexander MacDonald, the head of the Scottish Miners, and Alexander Campbell of the Scottish co-operative and trade-union movement, to support the Confederacy, and to call for recognition.[6] Ultimately, however, no mass movement developed in favour of intervening on behalf of the Confederacy or of breaking the blockade, and Pole argued that leaders such as Campbell were "increasingly out of touch with their following."[7] Debate has arisen over the contribution of the American Civil War to the collapse of the Scottish cotton industry, but it is most likely that the War accelerated its demise rather than destroyed it. The collapse of the industry began in 1857, and it was not until the early years of the twentieth century that it completely disappeared.[8] The cotton thread industry of Paisley was the one branch of the cotton trade which survived the effects of the Civil War. Although adversely affected by the Cotton Famine, it will be shown that the industry managed to survive and prosper as a result of trading conditions unique to Paisley.

The effect which the American Civil War had on the Scottish cotton industry, however, was much more far reaching than its influence on manufacturing production alone. Like Lancashire, Glasgow cotton manufacturing suffered from the shortage of raw cotton and henceforth, cotton operatives suffered on an individual level, being put on short-time or being placed out of work altogether. Great demands were therefore placed

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5 Botsford, 'Civil War', Vol.1, p. 393.

6 Botsford, 'Civil War', Vol.1, p. 425; for more information about Alexander Campbell's stance, see Fraser, Alexander Campbell, pp. 152-54; and Pole, J.R. Abraham Lincoln and the Working Classes of Britain. London, 1952, pp. 11-12.

7 Botsford, 'Civil War', Vol.1, p. 419; Pole, Lincoln and the Working Classes, p. 12.

8 See Robertson, A.J. 'The Decline of the Scottish Cotton Industry, 1860-1914', Business History 12 (1970), 116-28, pp. 120-21.

on charities and the Poor Law Unions to help alleviate the suffering. The Poor Law was strained and the Government was called upon to provide extra assistance.[9] Radicals pointed to the distress experienced by the cotton operatives and claimed that such workers needed more political representation in order to protect their own interests, and therefore managed to link the Cotton Famine to the franchise question. In addition, the conduct of unemployed operatives was praised and used by radicals as proof that the working classes were responsible enough to have the right to vote. It is also claimed that the conduct of the cotton operatives helped to bring about the 1867 Reform Act and also led to the rise of labour as an independent political force.[10]

A further way in which the Scottish textile industry was affected by the American Civil War was through its beneficial effect on textile trades other than cotton. Some work has already been completed on the effect of the War on Dundee's linen and jute industries, which benefited because they offered a substitute for cotton.[11] Less well covered is the similarly beneficial effect of the American Civil War on the tweed and woollen industries in the Borders and Dumfriesshire. These areas benefited not only from the use of these textiles as substitutes for cotton, but also in the increased American demand for woollen goods. Later chapters of this thesis will examine the precise impact of the War on these woollen industries, and will identify the factors which influenced industry conditions.

b) The Civil War and the Scottish Shipbuilding Industry

Shipbuilding had been a major contributor to the Scottish economy since the beginning of the nineteenth century, but it was the middle of that century which saw the industry's greatest growth. The development of iron hulls laid the foundation for future

9 Botsford, 'Civil War', Vol.1, pp. 399-400.
10 Botsford, 'Civil War', Vol.1, p. 427.
11 Carrie, Dundee and the Civil War.

prosperity, with the Vulcan works in Govan being the first to produce large iron passenger ships in the 1840s.[12] Lenman described how the strength of the iron industry in Scotland contributed to the success of the Clyde shipbuilders who produced 70% of all iron ships launched in Britain between 1851 and 1870.[13] The American Civil War had an extremely beneficial effect on the industry, with the Clyde shipbuilders providing ships for the Confederates who lacked a navy and were in urgent need of shipping. As a result, strong Confederate support was to be found amongst the shipbuilders of the Clyde, a fact which led to tension between the British and American Governments over this apparent support for the Confederacy. The British Government's attitude changed in July 1863, when a Southern victory became less likely and it vowed to seize any Confederate warship launched in Britain.[14] The second way in which the Clyde was linked with the Confederacy was through blockade-running. This represented one of the closest links between Scotland and America during the Civil War. The main product demanded by the South in contravention of the blockade was Scotch pig-iron, which benefited the iron manufacturers of Glasgow. The benefits gained by the shipbuilders during the Civil War, and the Confederate sympathy which resulted from this, illustrates how opinion could originate from economic self-interest, as well as political judgement. In this situation, however, the shipbuilders were trading directly with the Confederacy. In later chapters, we will see that when economic relationships were slightly more tenuous, the origins of Civil War sympathies were more complicated, and were related to factors other than those associated with the economy.

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12 Lynch, Scotland, p. 409.

13 Lenman, An Economic History, p. 180.

14 Botsford, 'Civil War', Vol.1, pp. 189-190; for more information on this subject, see Graham, B 'Scottish Shipbuilding and the American Civil War.' Unpublished MPhil Thesis, University of Strathclyde, 1992.

The Origins of Scottish Opinions during the American Civil War

a) The Development of Scottish Opinion during the Civil War

Scottish interest in the American Civil War ebbed and flowed with the tide of war, with most comment occurring when Britain was in danger of being seriously affected by the War, either politically or economically; or when issues of recognised significance, such as slavery, were very much at the fore. At the beginning of the War, tensions already existed between Britain and the United States, as a result of various diplomatic disputes, and also from the threat posed to the European Powers by the growing American Power. The two countries had strong economic links as well, due to the cotton trade, but had been constantly in dispute over the question of tariffs.[15] Two events led to intense Scottish interest in the Civil War: the Trent incident of November 1861, and the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863, while the later stages of the War saw attention diverting away from the conflict and to European events, such as the Dano-German War in 1864, instead.

The 1861 Trent Incident involved the capture of two Confederate envoys travelling to Europe on a British ship, the Trent, by a Northern ship, the San Jacinto. This event aroused British anger and led to the possibility of war between the Northern States and Britain. Newspapers in Scotland, as elsewhere in Britain, were outraged by this event, and many favoured war with America. The main opponents to war in Scotland were the Abolitionists and the Churches. The Abolitionists feared that a war would strengthen Confederate prospects; while the churches favoured a peace agreement between Great Britain and the United States.[16] The Emancipation Proclamation also aroused a variety of opinions. The Abolitionists welcomed it, although they criticised its delay, while pro-Union radicals were enthusiastic about the Proclamation because it bolstered their defence of the North as the guardian of freedom. Many, including some Liberals, saw the

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[15] Botsford, 'Civil War', vol. 1, pp. 327-9.

[16] See discussion on the Trent affair, and the opinions expressed upon it, in Botsford, 'Civil War', Vol.1, pp. 453-98.

Proclamation as an act of desperation, and Scottish Tories called for British intervention in the War because of the Proclamation, while other anti-Abolitionist opinion linked Emancipation with the possibility of servile war.[17] Overall, however, the Emancipation Proclamation helped to move support towards the North, as it became increasingly difficult to oppose the North which was now claiming to be fighting a war against slavery.

Scottish interest in the American Civil War peaked in 1863, and the rest of the War period saw public interest diverting to events in Europe, such as the Dano-German War. This later period also witnessed a split in Scottish Confederate support, between middle-class Liberals who supported the South because they saw it as an oppressed minority, but also abhorred slavery, and Tories who supported the South in its war against overarching democracy.[18] The Civil War period provided an interesting illustration of political opinions in Scotland, and the splits which occurred within political groups such as the Liberal party.

b) Scottish Abolitionist Attitudes towards the Civil War

One of the strongest manifestations of the links between Scotland and America was abolitionist activity, which in nineteenth century Scotland was centred around Glasgow and Edinburgh, although research has shown Aberdeen to be a prominent area too.[19] The roots of the abolitionist movement in Scotland were in the early part of the nineteenth century when the greatest concern was for the abolition of slavery within the British Empire. The Emancipation Act of 1833 gave British Abolitionists the opportunity to widen their horizons and to campaign against slavery throughout the rest of the world.

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17 Botsford, 'Civil War', Vol.2, pp. 569.

18 Botsford, 'Civil War', Vol.2, pp. 805-806.

19 See for example: Rice, C.D. 'Abolitionists and Abolitionism in Aberdeen: A Test Case for the Nineteenth Century Anti-Slavery Movement', Northern Scotland 1 (1972), pp. 65-87.

America was a special target, with many British evangelicals feeling that Britain should be held accountable for the development of American slavery because America had been 'moulded' by British government and law.[20] In addition, the close cultural ties which linked America and Britain contributed to a mutual interest, and these were facilitated by greater transport and communication links.

The Northern insistence that the Civil War was being fought for the preservation of the Union, and not for abolition, meant that it lost much potential international support. Consequently, the Scottish Abolitionists took an anti-Confederacy stance at the beginning of the war rather than a pro-Union one. Their main concern was that Britain should not recognise the Confederacy as this would strengthen the position of the Southern States. This same attitude also led the Abolitionists to oppose a war between Britain and the Northern States following the Trent Affair, which they felt would have amounted to Britain actively supporting the Slave Power. There was even some Abolitionist support for secession, with the Reverend Isaac Nelson of the Free Church, for example, supporting Southern independence on the ground that abolition would be achieved more quickly.[21] Advocates of this view argued that the close proximity of the free North would make escape for slaves so easy that slavery would become untenable, and that, as a newly independent state, the Confederacy would not want to alienate foreign support by supporting slavery. Scottish support for the abolitionist cause was one of the main reasons why the North did not gain as much support from Scots as it might have hoped. The delay of the Emancipation Proclamation led many to believe that the North was no more the friend of the slave than was the slave-owning South.[22]

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[20] Rice, C.D. The Scots Abolitionists, 1833-1861. Baton Rouge, 1981, p. 5.

[21] Botsford, 'Civil War,' Vol. 2, p. 804.

[22] See, for example, the Border Advertiser, 13.9.61.

c) The Response of the Free Church towards the Civil War

The activities of the Free Church of Scotland are of particular interest to us, given the involvement of the Church with the Southern States of America in the antebellum period. The abolitionist credentials of the Free Church had been compromised during its attempts to raise money in the 1840s. A delegation went to America in 1843 to raise funds, and controversy arose when money was accepted from Southern slave-owners. Abolitionists from inside and outside of the Free Church established the 'Send Back the Money' campaign and arguments raged within the church over this issue.[23] Reverend Thomas Chalmers, of the Free Church, however, called for the money to be retained and argued that the idea of 'unchurching' the slave owners was wrong. Chalmers was an embarrassment to Abolitionist Evangelicals in America as "his arguments were precisely those of the great Southern Presbyterian intellectuals Dr Robert Dabney and J. H. Thornwell in their defence of slavery as compatible with Christianity."[24] Perhaps the most significant aspect of the Disruption was the way it illustrated the attitude of some in the established Church towards a strong state exercising too many powers, a concept only too well entwined with the American Civil War. At the outbreak of the Civil War, following the New York abolitionist, Reverend Cheever's tour of Scotland in which he condemned the South, many in the Free Church began to support the abolitionist campaign against the South.[25] As we have already noted, there were elements within the Free Church who sided with the Confederacy either because they supported the South's right to self-determination or because they believed that slavery would be abolished under an

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23 See discussion of the 'Send Back the Money' campaign in Ross, A.C. 'The Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa: A Product of the Disruption?' In Scotland in the Age of the Disruption, pp. 151-64. Edited by S.J. Brown and M. Fry. Edinburgh, 1993, p.161.

24 Ross, 'The Dutch Reformed Church', p. 161; For more information on the Free Church and the South, see Shepperson, 'The Free Church and American Slavery,' and 'Thomas Chalmers, the Free Church and the American South.'

25 Botsford, 'Civil War', vol. 1, p. 131.

independent Confederacy.[26] We will see that the Liberal party faced similar divisions with regard to the American Civil War.

d) Scottish Class Sympathies during the Civil War

Scottish sympathy during the American Civil War was not divided along class lines, because different class issues managed to arouse sympathies for both sides in the War. It is therefore too simplistic to align working class support with the democratic North, and upper-class support with the aristocratic Confederacy. Divisions occurred amongst the working classes, for example, with support for the North predominating among the working masses rather than their union leaders, who were more sympathetic towards the Confederacy. Harrison explained the reasons behind working class Northern support, describing how:

> the argument from democratic principle; the absence of a politically privileged class in the Northern States; the argument from the principle of the solidarity of labour interests everywhere; and the ties of family that bound many British workers to their relatives in North America all told decisively against the South.[27]

The leadership of the working classes, through the trade unions and the working-class journals, tended towards support of the Confederacy. Scottish trade-union opinion was opposed to the North, rather than pro-Southern, as exemplified by the Glasgow Sentinel which adopted Garrisonian arguments against the North.[28] The paper was critical of the North's refusal to adopt an abolitionist position, and decided that the issue of the War was the South's desire to secure self-determination.[29] Harrison described how the

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[26] Botsford, 'Civil War', vol. 2, p. 608.

[27] Harrison, Before the Socialists, p. 65.

[28] Harrison, Before the Socialists, pp. 50-1.

[29] For a discussion of the Sentinel and its Southern sympathies, see Fraser, W.H. 'A Newspaper for its Generation: The Glasgow Sentinel 1850-1877', Scottish Labour History Society Journal 4 (July 1971), pp. 18-31, pp. 25-27; and Fraser, Alexander Campbell, pp. 152-54.

Glasgow Gazette favoured the North before the Battle of Manassas but began to see secession as inevitable, and concluded that the War should end as soon as possible.[30] One reason for trade union support for the South may have been the Northern States' opposition to trade union activity. Another possibility is the dislike fostered by many working class leaders, especially of the older generation, of the capitalist North. To many others, the fact that the radical capitalist John Bright supported the North was reason enough for them to support the South. Sympathies expressed with regard to the American Civil War were often more reflective of feelings felt at home towards certain political and social figures.

While much Scottish upper class support did reside with the Confederacy, due to a dislike of Northern democracy, there were exceptions: most notably the Duke of Argyll, who was a supporter of the Northern cause and of strict neutrality on the part of Great Britain. The Duke was fervently opposed to slavery, but of most interest was his belief in the perpetual nature of national 'union.' The Duke argued that secession was wrong and was a potential danger to all nations. In a speech to his tenantry in October 1861, he stated that "no Government had ever existed which could admit that right to renounce allegiance to it which was claimed by the Southern States,"[31] and that "there are some things worth fighting for, and . . . national existence is one of these."[32] In a letter to Gladstone in May, 1862, he described secession as "simply the doctrine of anarchy; its hand is against every Government, and the hand of every Government must be, and ought to be, against it."[33] It is therefore clear that simple explanations of class as the basis for Civil War opinions are insufficient. The Duke of Argyll was clearly opposed to any form of opposition to a

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[30] See Harrison in Before the Socialists for a discussion of papers such as the Beehive, the Working Man, Reynolds News, and on a Scottish level the Glasgow Sentinel and the Glasgow Gazette, pp. 50-52.

[31] Campbell, George Douglas, George Douglas, Eighth Duke of Argyll - Autobiography and Memoirs, edited by the Dowager Duchess of Argyll, London, 1906, p. 169.

[32] Campbell, George Douglas, p. 174.

[33] Campbell, George Douglas, p. 190.

national government, and this conviction, allied to his opposition to slavery, led to his support for the North.

This illustrates the care which must be taken when arriving at conclusions about the support given to the two sides in the American Civil War. Opinions did not divide clearly upon class or political lines, as we have seen, and responses to the issues which the Civil War threw up were complex, depending upon the commentators' attitudes towards a variety of factors, including slavery, national independence, the concept of Union, majority-rule, and democracy.

e) Scottish Political Reactions to the American Civil War

i) Liberal Attitudes

During the American Civil War, divisions occurred in the Liberal party between those on the Palmerstonian wing of the party, who were suspicious about democratic reform and supported the South, and radicals who supported reform and the Northern States. The radical wing of the Liberal party is particularly important to our discussion about the American Civil War because of the tendency of Scottish radicals in the antebellum period to look to America for much of their inspiration. They admired the absence of a state church, a monarchy and a landed aristocracy in the United States, and they supported the written constitution of the United States, the democratic franchise, and the great statesmen which they believed the political system produced. They accepted that America had its problems, including slavery and political corruption, but they believed that the positive aspects greatly outweighed the negative.[34] Those who favoured political reform pointed to the rights enjoyed by Americans which were denied to Britons: the Scotsman commented in 1831, with respect to its support for the extension of the franchise to the middle classes, that:

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[34] Botsford, 'Civil War', Vol. 1, pp. 7-8.

> if any man says, that the whole adult male inhabitants of the state of New York are richer, better educated, and fitter to be trusted with the franchise, than the 50,000 wealthiest and most respectable persons in Scotland, we would not argue with him; we would laugh in his face![35]

We will see that, during the Civil War, Scottish radicals overwhelmingly supported the North, acknowledging that a Northern victory was crucial to hopes for British electoral reform. During the War, however, fears arose amongst those who supported democratic reform about the consequences for democracy in Scotland and Britain, and indeed the world, now that the 'Model Republic' was experiencing such troubles. To radicals, and others supporting British political reform, the best way to counteract conservative arguments about the failure of democracy was to portray the Confederacy as an aristocracy bent on maintaining slavery, and the North as the guardian of freedom and democracy, a task made easier following Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.

Moderate-Liberals, who supported Palmerston's doubts about extending the suffrage, took a different view to the radicals. Allen described how Palmerston privately "hoped for the success of the Confederacy, because it would gravely weaken a potential rival of Britain's - and a democratic one."[36] While many other moderate-Liberals supported the right of the Southern States to self-determination, their doubts about democratic reform in Britain also contributed to their Civil War attitudes, and we have seen that many criticised the extreme nature of American democracy in the antebellum period. It will be shown that much of their anti-Northern rhetoric was derived from their fears about the impact which a Northern victory would have upon the British political system.[37]

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35 The Scotsman, 23.3.31.

36 Allen, 'Civil War', p. 66.

37 For more information about diverse Liberal attitudes towards the Civil War, see Whitridge, 'British Liberals and the Civil War'.

ii) Conservative Arguments

Throughout the antebellum period, British Conservatives pointed to America as the main reason for resisting further political reform at home. They used political riots and ballot frauds during American elections as evidence of the failure of democracy in practice. The American Civil War provided Conservatives with the opportunity to develop their arguments further, and they pointed to the War as evidence of the failure of American democracy. Firstly, they argued that the collapse of the Union proved that the American nation was too large to sustain a democracy, especially when it contained such a heterogeneous population. The divisions and sectionalism, based largely on geographical and cultural differences, which were highlighted during the Civil War, confirmed to Conservatives their belief in the unsustainability of American democracy. Secondly, Conservative dislike of President Lincoln, whom they saw as inadequate and divisive, made them highlight the problems which could arise in Britain if a mass electorate was able to elect such a leader. This was further illustration, they argued, of the instability of a universal franchise, which would result in 'mob-rule.' President Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus and his adoption of military conscription also led Conservatives to claim that this proved how democracy inevitably led to tyranny and authoritarian rule.[38] Scottish Conservatives saw the electoral advantages which could accrue to them as a result of the American difficulties, as Botsford described: "The Scottish Tories were particularly anxious that the current disillusionment with American democracy should directly benefit themselves and lead to a reinvigorated Conservatism in Scotland."[39]

There is little evidence to suggest that Scottish aristocrats favoured the Confederacy out of support for their aristocratic counterparts in the American South. Bellows described, however, that British Conservatives did tend to depict the American South as a separate civilization from the rest of America, and through this, they

38 Lillibridge, Beacon of Freedom, p. 117.
39 Botsford, 'Civil War', vol.2, p. 598.

attempted to appeal to British sympathy for subjugated national minorities.[40] The issue of slavery was also used by Conservatives to defend their pro-Southern views. They used the issue to attack the North and its democratic credentials, by arguing that the North was not fighting an abolition war. They opposed the Emancipation Proclamation of September 1862, arguing that it would lead to servile war,[41] and in their support for the Confederacy, Conservatives argued that blacks were treated no worse by Southerners than they were by Northerners, and went further, by claiming that abolition was more likely as a result of the South gaining its independence.

iii) The Conflicts Faced by Both Conservatives and Liberals

The issue of slavery complicated the loyalties of both Northern and Southern sympathisers in Scotland during the American Civil War. To those who supported the rights of a country to self-determination and independent nationhood, the Confederacy could have proved as desirable a cause to support as the nationalist struggles in Italy and Poland at that time. Slavery prevented this, however, as Conservatives and Liberals alike would not go as far as to defend the Southern States unconditionally. Meanwhile, some Northern support wavered because, while the Northern states stood as the representatives of free and democratic government, they also wanted to dictate to the South and eventually subjugate it. This was further compounded by the reluctance of the North to make slavery the issue of the War. Many newspapers in Scotland attempted to surmount this problem by disagreeing with slavery and thus supporting what they saw as the moral right in the conflict, but backed the Southern States in their bid for independence, suggesting that this would also be the quickest way to rid America of slavery, given the international pressure which the Confederacy would face.[42] The

40 Bellows, 'British Conservative Reaction to the Civil War', p. 519.
41 Botsford, 'Civil War', vol. 2, p. 665.
42 The Dumfries Standard, 15.7.63. and 19.8.63.

North British Daily Mail argued that it was the Southern aristocracy which was destroying democracy in America, rather than democracy destroying itself.[43] The voices arguing against democracy remained strongest, however, taking their opportunity to warn against such occurrences in Great Britain. The Edinburgh Review talked of "the danger of an election of the chief magistrate by the simultaneous votes of the entire population, and of his consequent identification with some disputed principle,"[44] and Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine commented that "it is precisely because we do not share the admiration of America for her own institutions and political tendencies that we do not now see in the impending change an event altogether to be deplored."[45]

Radicals continued to support the democratic framework of the United States but were disappointed that the maintenance of the Union was espoused as the major issue in the War, and not slavery. Lillibridge described how the different political factions in Britain used the existence of slavery to again defend their views on democracy.[46] Conservatives saw that American claims of liberty and democracy were ludicrous given the existence of slavery, while middle class observers agreed, but felt that slavery should be abolished to promote democracy and social reform. Radicals countered the Conservatives' argument by claiming that American democracy and Southern society were two separate things. To radicals, slavery was not a product of democracy but of Southern aristocracy. The Emancipation Proclamation offered a way out of the theoretical and political dilemma by depicting the North as fighting for the freedom of the slaves, while the South represented aristocracy and slavery. This occurred to an extent, as the Proclamation provided the North with a cause which could attract more support. But given the delay in issuing the Proclamation, Lincoln's policy was seen as an act of

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43 Botsford, 'Civil War', Vol. 1, p. 131.

44 'The Election of President Lincoln and its Consequences', the ER 113 (April 1861), 555-87, p. 558.

45 'The Disruption of the Union', BEM 90 (1861), pp.125-134, p. 126.

46 Lillibridge, Beacon of Freedom, pp. 111-13.

desperation which arrived too late. For most observers, the proclamation did not furnish the North with a moral superiority, but rather provided the North with a convenient advantage to further its aims.

f) Scottish Nationalism and the American Civil War

There was a distinct lack of nationalist feeling in Scotland during the first half of the nineteenth century. A sense of economic prosperity meant that there was general satisfaction with the Union and its continuation was not questioned. Dissatisfaction only began to be raised around 1850, as a result of increasing centralisation of government. More Scottish control over Scottish affairs was demanded, and in 1853 a movement was established to forward these aims. The National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights was made up of both Conservative and Liberal supporters. It was a short-lived affair, with a heterogeneous membership which lacked real coherence. It is important to point out, however, that the Association was not a nationalist group; it did not call for the break-up of the Union, but merely wanted greater Scottish participation in the formulation of laws which affected Scotland. In Europe, on the other hand, there were a number of real nationalist struggles taking place in the mid-nineteenth century. Hungarian nationalists were calling for greater independence from Austria during the 1860s, with a compromise reached in 1867 with the establishment of the Austro-Hungarian empire, headed by the House of Habsburg. The Poles revolted against their Russian rulers in 1863, demanding independence, but were unsuccessful; whilst in Italy, during the late 1850s and early 1860s, nationalists sought to unify the Italian states under one independent government, free from foreign rule. Italian Independence was won in 1861.[47] As there was little nationalist feeling in Scotland at this time, support for independence movements in Europe and America was mixed. Some support did exist,

[47] Wood, A. Europe 1815-1945. London, 1964, pp. 194-226.

especially for figures such as the Italian nationalist Garibaldi, but the American Civil War did not arouse Scottish nationalist sentiments.[48]

Conflicts arose between support for Southern independence and a dislike of slavery, as we have previously noted. Finnie described how Reverend George Gilfillan of the United Secession Church in Dundee met this conflict himself.[49] He supported the Italian nationalists and, unlike his colleagues, he also supported the South in the American Civil War. As a supporter of the abolitionist cause, he defended his position "through the sincere belief that [the South] fought legitimately for independence and, furthermore, through the concomitant belief that the North was 'hypocritical' in waging a 'wretched ... cruel' war ostensibly for negro emancipation but actually for sordid conquest."[50] Finnie explained how Gilfillan used the Scottish example to defend the South: "the impact of the Scottish national heritage on his own personal upbringing predisposed him to use the historic struggle for political and religious independence, rather than the modern struggles of Italy or Hungary, as most poignantly analogous to that of the (temporarily) prostrated South."[51]

Despite the appearance of analogies between the Scottish nationalist cause and the Confederate cause, the Scottish cause was used to advance support for the Confederacy, rather than the other way round.[52] Finnie illustrated this fact by describing the stance taken by the Edinburgh Courant:

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48 See, for example, Fyfe, J. 'Scottish Volunteers with Garibaldi', Scottish Historical Review 57 (Oct 1978), 168-81.

49 Finnie, 'Reconstruction', vol.1, pp. 201-2.

50 Finnie, 'Reconstruction', vol.1, p. 202.

51 Finnie, 'Reconstruction', vol.1, p. 203.

52 See Finnie, 'Reconstruction', vol. 1, pp. 200-204.

> the attraction of using the popular image of the glorious, traditional struggle for independence to keep alive sympathy for the Southern States was heightened by the fact that it could thereby issue a strong emotional comparison, based on legitimate admiration of a historical Scottish cause, while at the same time not necessarily feeling obliged to champion the modern Scottish movements against English over-centralization.[53]

The cause of the Southern States of America was not used to increase support for Scottish nationalism, as the issue was not relevant to Scots in the 1860s. Indeed, Harvie has described the decade as "the Unionist 1860s".[54] It could be argued that Scotland's example illustrated how 'freedom with union' could work. Scottish civil society continued to exist after the Union of 1707, and Unionists would argue that it was the Union which allowed Scotland to survive. This discussion does show, however, how opinion could be manipulated by the press in order to increase support for the Confederacy.

Conclusion

The American Civil War brought to the fore issues which had long existed, but had never before been concentrated into one struggle. Nineteenth-century Scotland was alive with these issues and consequently viewed the War with particular interest. The issue of most importance was the way in which Scotland viewed American political and social institutions, and how this affected Scottish perceptions of democratic reform at home. The Northern victory damaged Conservative anti-reform arguments by enhancing Scottish respect for American democracy, and the reformers' cause was therefore strengthened by the Union victory. The Glasgow Sentinel commented that "it had been the success with which the Republic had weathered the tremendous military and social upheaval of the Civil War which had most decisively proved that Republican institutions were equal to any emergency."[55]

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53 Finnie, 'Reconstruction', vol.1, p. 204.

54 Harvie, C. 'Ballads of a Nation', History Today 49 (9) (September 1999), 10-16, 11.

55 The Glasgow Sentinel, 22.4.65, and 13.5.65, quoted in Finnie, 'Reconstruction', vol.1, p.286.

The impact of the American Civil War on British democratic reform will be explored in more detail later, with some arguing that the influence of the Civil War was particularly felt during the 1865 General Election, in which the Liberals won fifty-three out of sixty seats in Scotland. Finnie described how Conservative fears about increasing Americanization of British political institutions were aroused "by the successes in the 1865 General Election of pro-Northern British radicals such as J.S. Mill, Thomas Hughes, and Henry Fawcett, and, at a purely Scottish level, of such men as Duncan McLaren, Laurence Oliphant, James Stirling, and W.E. Baxter."[56] In the period preceding the 1868 Reform Act, in which all Scottish male urban householders were enfranchised, both sides used the Federal victory to argue for their own cause. Political reformers argued that the victory represented the triumph of freedom and democracy over aristocracy and oppression, even though the Tories argued that it was the democratic process which had led to the American problems, and that it was the 'dark side' of democracy that had won the War.[57] To say, however, as Adams has, that the Northern victory actually caused the 1867 reform is an exaggeration, as the subject was already being debated in Britain.[58] If the Confederates had triumphed, however, the whole democratic ideal of America would have been thrown into disarray, which may have made reform in Britain all the more difficult to bring about. The victory of the North provided an added impetus to the debate, and clearly helped the pro-reformers to win the argument.

Scottish attitudes towards both sides in the War provoke a great deal of interest. Clearly, as in Great Britain as a whole, loyalty to either belligerent was not clear cut and motivations often appeared to be contradictory. Some members of the aristocracy supported the Union, while many Liberals supported the South. Loyalties tended to arise from a number of factors. The economic effects of the War were occasionally instrumental,

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[56] Finnie, 'Reconstruction', vol.1, p. 260.
[57] Finnie, 'Reconstruction', Vol. 1, p. 260.
[58] Adams, Civil War, vol. 2, p. 299.

but to overstress this as an influence upon attitudes would be too simplistic. In order to assess the importance of the various determinants of opinion we need to further examine the local effects of the American Civil War upon Scotland. This has been done to a degree already, with studies showing how Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dundee were affected by, and reacted to, the War. The shipbuilders of the Clyde supported the Confederacy because of their interest in providing for that side's navy, whilst Dundee also benefited from the blockade of raw cotton, since the local jute industry prospered at the expense of the cotton industry in the west. Other areas promise much in this respect too. Paisley, for example, suffered as a result of the effect of the War on its cotton industry, but exhibited support for both North and South. The woollen trade of the Scottish Borders benefited greatly as a result of the War and was strongly pro-Northern in its support, although this had as much to do with the radical tradition of the Borders as it did its economic effects. Dumfriesshire saw two main effects from the War: a beneficial effect for its small wool textile industry and a negative effect on its agricultural trade. It will be shown, in this region, that economic factors had little effect on attitudes, with political attitudes towards democratic reform of greater importance.

Chapter 6: The Effect of the Cotton Famine on Dumfriesshire

Chapter 6: The Effect of the Cotton Famine on Dumfriesshire, Nov 1862 - Apr 1863

The cotton industry in Great Britain was concentrated in Lancashire and the West of Scotland during the nineteenth century.[1] While Dumfriesshire did not therefore experience a direct effect from the Cotton Famine of 1862 and 1863, the region did react to the suffering in Lancashire through the movement which was established to raise subscriptions for the distressed operatives. In addition, the area also benefited in a small way from the shift towards woollen manufacturing which was a result of the Cotton Famine. The most important effect which the Cotton Famine had in Dumfriesshire, however, was the downturn which the agricultural trade of the county suffered. We will see how Dumfriesshire farmers relied very heavily upon the demand for agricultural produce among the cotton operatives of Lancashire. The Cotton Famine hit this demand and consequently, Dumfriesshire was hit by a severe depression in the agricultural market. This analysis of the economic effects of the American Civil War will provide the background to the next chapter, which will examine the reaction of Dumfriessians to the Civil War, and indicate the extent to which economic factors were instrumental in deciding the level of interest in the War, and support for the two belligerents. This chapter will begin by examining the movement for Lancashire subscriptions in Dumfriesshire in order to provide some insight into attitudes towards the Cotton Famine. It will then explore the economic impact of the Civil War upon Dumfriesshire, examining both the textile industry of Dumfries, and the local agricultural trade.

The Dumfriesshire Movement for Subscriptions to Lancashire

Throughout Great Britain, and indeed further afield in America and Australia, campaigns were organised to raise subscriptions for the relief of the unemployed cotton operatives in Lancashire. Dumfriesshire was quick to react to the Cotton Famine, and

[1] Lenman, Economic History, pp. 116-21.

local newspapers were eager to encourage generous donations to the manufacturing districts. The first attempts to help were organised through public meetings in the region to raise money and to publicise the campaign, and collections were also made at local churches and benefit concerts. Local individuals also established individual efforts to raise money and collect clothing and other items. It is important to examine this subscription movement because the public meetings provide an opportunity for us to examine the wide range of issues which arose during the cotton shortage. The first meeting was held in the King's Arms Assembly Room, Lockerbie, on 27th November 1862, where Charles Stewart of Hillside, the manager of the Annandale estates and a local champion of agricultural improvements, was in the chair. The first motion was proposed by the Reverend Robert Hill Whyte, the United Presbyterian moderator at Dryfesdale, and seconded by Dr Wilson[2]:

> From the vast number of operatives out of employment in the Lancashire and other cotton-manufacturing districts of England the meeting is aware that distress to an unprecedented extent at present prevails, and may probably continue for a lengthened period. That this, and the patience and good feeling with which this calamity has been borne by hundreds of thousands of our suffering fellow countrymen call for the respect and admiration, as well as for the sympathy and aid, of the whole country.[3]

It is interesting to note how much importance was placed upon the passive response of the Lancashire operatives by the Lockerbie meeting. There was a common concern throughout Britain at this time about the threat of social disturbance arising out of the operatives' hardship. We will see how some, such as the Dumfries Standard, called upon the operatives to be enfranchised as a means of preventing disorder; and how, by the end of the War, the agitators for further political reform pointed to the restraint of the starving cotton operatives as proof of their ability to exercise their votes responsibly.

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[2] Identity uncertain, but very likely to be Dr. James Wilson, J.P., Chief-Magistrate of Lockerbie.

[3] The Dumfries Courier, 2.12.62.

This meeting was typical of many held throughout Scotland, and while local newspapers would not question the campaign, criticism did occasionally arise from correspondents who felt that the money was targeted at the wrong area. One correspondent to the Courier suggested that areas such as Carlisle were more deserving of local support: "surely when, as in this case, we should be thankful that there is no necessity for charity beginning at home, it is only right that it should begin as near home as possible."[4] Another correspondent to the Courier described how there was a great deal of support for this attitude, with the West of Scotland also being considered more deserving than Lancashire. The writer disagreed with this view, however, stating that:

> Since the meeting last Wednesday, I hear it asked frequently, "Are we not in danger of neglecting our own Scottish poor in doing what we have begun to do for Lancashire?"... It should be more distinctly understood than it seemed to be that in giving to Lancashire there is anything but an implied resolution to withhold aid from Paisley or Glasgow, or any other part of our country in which similar distress has begun to show itself. Sad as the prospect is for the 30,000 or 40,000 living by cotton in Scotland, it is manifest that their distress never can approach that of the English in *extent*, and it cannot be said that it has as yet equalled it in *severity*.[5]

The knock-on effects of the distress in Lancashire were felt throughout Dumfriesshire. The prosperity which cotton brought to the manufacturing areas meant that demand for produce from the agricultural regions rose, and these regions also prospered. When the famine began to take hold, people began to realise that this would signal problems for Dumfriesshire. The Courier stated that "it is impossible to believe that men and women whose work represented fifteen millions a year of wages can become idlers, and, in fact, though not in spirit, paupers, without a depressing result on the food market."[6] This realisation led many to argue in favour of financial help for the manufacturing districts, and therefore much of this 'charitable' sentiment was related to

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[4] The Dumfries Courier, 25.11.62.
[5] The Dumfries Courier, 9.12.62.
[6] The Dumfries Courier, 11.11.62.

self-interest. The Courier claimed that "we owe a deep debt to Lancashire for the profitable markets afforded, and the stimulus they have given to the cultivation of the soil; and humanity, duty, and gratitude all join in pressing for repayment."[7] While the Courier spoke of acting on the basis of gratitude, there must have been an awareness that future agricultural survival would partly depend upon Lancashire's ability to purchase agricultural produce. Evidence of this sentiment arose at another major meeting in the area, at the Court-House in Dumfries on 3rd December, 1862, when the M.P. for Dumfriesshire, Mr Hope Johnstone reiterated that Dumfriesshire relied on the manufacturing districts for its prosperity, but added that he felt that it was inappropriate to stress too heavily this line of argument, when calling for financial assistance.[8] These meetings indicated that there were a number of motives behind the Dumfriesshire campaign for subscriptions, and early recognition of the economic difficulties which the Cotton Famine would herald for Dumfriesshire.

The local press of Dumfries supported the campaign for financial aid for Lancashire, with the Standard calling on the richest individuals in the county to forgo some of their luxuries in order to help those suffering in Lancashire.[9] Many opinions were also voiced as to both the short-term and long-term solutions to the problem of the cotton supply. The Herald was concerned about the amount of money flowing into Lancashire as aid, claiming that it "cannot flow on forever; and even if it could, it were worse than folly - it would be criminal - not to stop and inquire if it ought to be allowed to do so."[10] Its concern was for thousands of people laying idle for too long a time. It suggested spade labour as a possibility, but preferred the absorption of cotton operatives into other trades. It is likely that the Herald was worried about possible social disruption among the

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[7] The Dumfries Courier, 18.12.62.
[8] The Dumfries Herald, 5.12.62.
[9] The Dumfries Standard, 26.11.62.
[10] The Dumfries Herald, 13.2.63.

operatives, a common concern at this time. The reliance of Britain upon American grown cotton was regarded as the main problem. The Cotton Famine illustrated to many that it was foolish to rely on one country for such an important raw material, and support therefore grew for the development of other supplies of raw cotton.[11] The keenly anti-slavery Standard suggested that the Cotton Famine may have been Britain's punishment for benefiting from the toil of slaves. By seeking out alternative supplies of cotton, the newspaper believed that "a blow will be given to negro slavery", and that the Southern States would be forced to accept paid labour as the way to move forward.[12] On the question of recognition arising from the Cotton Famine, the Standard commented that "Britain did wrong in depending so exclusively on slave-grown cotton, but she is not going to do worse by interfering to give her moral support to a Confederacy that unblushingly defends slavery, and builds it, all odious and bloody, into the very basis of its constitution."[13] The local press was eager to point out that the cotton famine had not forced Britain into recognition of the Confederacy, and went on to conclude that cotton was clearly not 'king.' The Standard wrote that "the system with whose sovereignty we were menaced has been shewn to have had no political influence whatever in the Queen's dominion . . . in no sense is cotton a kingly ruler in the United Kingdom."[14] This was an early indication that economic factors were not influencing opinion on the American Civil War. The rest of this chapter will provide more information about the economic effect of the Civil War in Dumfriesshire, to further explain the level of this influence.

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[11] The Dumfries Standard, 26.1.61, 10.4.61; the Dumfries Herald, 30.10.63.
[12] The Dumfries Standard, 4.9.61.
[13] The Dumfries Standard, 14.1.63.
[14] The Dumfries Standard, 14.1.63.

The Dumfriesshire Textile Trades and the Civil War

a) The Woollen Trade

The British woollen industry benefited as a result of the American Civil War. Based primarily in Yorkshire, the industry was also to be found in the English West Country, and in several regions of Scotland. The Scottish industry was concentrated in the Scottish Borders, but smaller concentrations were based in Aberdeen, Fife, and Dumfriesshire.[15] The Borders industry will be examined later in this thesis, but this chapter will examine the effect of the American Civil War upon the Dumfriesshire industry, based in Dumfries and Langholm. The main effect which the War had upon the British woollen industry was as a direct result of the Cotton Famine. As cotton became scarce in 1862, and prices rose, manufacturers substituted wool for cotton, leading to extremely prosperous conditions in the woollen industry. A second effect of the War was to increase American demand for British woollen goods, especially uniforms and blankets. The chapter on the Borders industry will provide a much greater analysis of these effects.

The beneficial effect of the American Civil War on the Dumfriesshire woollen industry was not as great as the effect on the Borders woollen industry, but it must be remembered that the industry in Dumfriesshire was much smaller, consisting of two Dumfries mills and four Langholm mills. There is a distinct lack of evidence regarding these woollen firms, so use has been made of newspaper descriptions of conditions, and privately held papers where these exist. The woollen industry in Langholm was dominated by the firms of Reid & Taylor, Adam Anderson & Son, Andrew Byers & Son, and James Bowman & Sons in the 1860s.[16] The general consensus is that Langholm, along

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[15] Turner, W.H.K. 'Wool Textile Manufacture in Scotland', Scottish Geographical Magazine 80 (Sept 1964), 81-90.

[16] Information gained from the personal papers of Mr Arthur Bell of Langholm.

with Dumfries, saw significant growth in the woollen trade after the 1860s.[17] Figures published in the Dumfries and Galloway Standard illustrate the growth in the size of the Langholm woollen industry:

	1851	1863
Mills	2	4
Sets of Machines	7	11
Power Looms	0	58

Table 6.1: The Growth in Langholm's Woollen Industry, 1851 and 1863. [Figures from the Dumfries Standard, 14.10.63.]

The Eskdale and Liddesdale Advertiser, Langholm's newspaper, provided a comprehensive commentary of conditions in the woollen market, through a combination of trade reports and coverage of manufacturers' meetings. Unfortunately, local trade commentators did not directly link the prosperity of Langholm with the American Civil War. Despite this, however, there is a great deal of evidence that the prosperity of the town coincided exactly with that of the Yorkshire and Borders industry, for which evidence does exist linking this prosperity to the Civil War.[18]

Initially, in the early stages of the Civil War, the woollen industry remained fairly flat, as the glut of cotton which had been accumulated before the War helped to mitigate the early effects of the Civil War and the Cotton Famine. In 1862, however, Langholm began to experience unmistakable prosperity in the woollen industry. For example, at a meeting of the Eskdale and Liddesdale Agricultural and Pastoral Society on 26th September 1862, Mr J. J. W. Murray of Murray House, declared that "the town was never in a more prosperous state or the manufactures making more money."[19] This view was

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[17] See, for example, Donnachie, I. 'The Textile Industry in South West Scotland 1750-1914.' In Scottish Textile History, pp. 19-36. Edited by J. Butt and K. Ponting. Aberdeen, 1987, p. 19.

[18] See Greeves, 'Civil War'; and later chapter on the Borders industry and the Civil War.

[19] The Eskdale and Liddesdale Advertiser, 1.10.62.

echoed in the New Year celebrations of 1863 at Andrew Byers & Son's Soiree and Ball, when Robert Byers described how "we [are] in the midst of plenty and in a flourishing state, and mostly all classes of the community [are] employed, which is a great blessing."[20] It must be pointed out that this period marked the height of the Cotton Famine, and further illustration of the significance of 1863 was exhibited at Langholm Wool Fair in August of that year, when the Advertiser stated that "we believe there was never more wool sold at Langholm nor higher prices realised for the last thirty years."[21] The prosperity continued throughout 1863, with confidence leading to Reid and Taylor building "a new mill of four storeys, with attics above, and large finishing rooms behind."[22] A small piece of evidence has been found which links this prosperity to the American Civil War. At Andrew Byers & Son's Soiree and Ball on 31st December 1863, Mr T. Lightbody described the great prosperity of Langholm and called on the town to "survey the many great buildings that have been erected for manufacturing purposes within the last two or three years."[23] These two or three years coincided with the Civil War period, and provides a small indication of the connection of this prosperity to the Civil War, a theme which will be further developed in the chapter on the Borders industry.

The woollen industry of Dumfries was a relatively small business, especially compared with towns such as Hawick and Galashiels. The industry was dominated by J.L. Scott and Son at Kingholm Mills, and Robert and Walter Scott of Nithsdale Mills. Figures from the Dumfries Standard again illustrate the growth of trade which occurred in the town:

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[20] The Eskdale Advertiser, 7.1.63.
[21] The Eskdale Advertiser, 5.8.63.
[22] The Eskdale Advertiser, 6.1.64.
[23] The Eskdale Advertiser, 6.1.64.

	1851	1863
Mills	1	2
Sets of Machines	4	14
Power Looms	0	109

Table 6.2: The Growth in Dumfries' Woollen Industry, 1851 and 1863. [Figures from the Dumfries Standard, 14.10.63.]

These figures are interesting when compared with those of Langholm. They illustrate that while Dumfries had fewer mills in 1863 than Langholm, it had nearly double the number of power looms. Therefore, production in Dumfries can be ascertained as being greater than that of Langholm. The prosperity which Dumfries enjoyed during the 1860s was allied with that of the Scottish Borders by the Dumfries Standard in September 1863:

> Hawick, Galashiels, Dumfries, the great centres of the woollen trade, shew the most unmistakable signs of prosperity throughout the South of Scotland. For yarns, tweeds, and hosiery, an active and ever-increasing demand exists, the American war and the collapse of the English cotton trade having given an immense impetus to what may not improperly be called the peculiarly Scottish branch of the great woollen business.[24]

It is striking that here, the dual effect of the American Civil War was alluded to, with demand from America and the substitution of wool for cotton, given as explanations for the prosperity. A month later, the Standard was pleased to comment that, "when we consider that the woollen trade has given [Dumfries] new life and a new sense of prosperity - what must yet become ever-increasing prosperity - we may be pardoned the egotism of saying that the Queen of the South may be proud of her manufactures. "[25] As stated earlier, the issues raised in this section on the woollen industry of Dumfries and Langholm will be examined in much greater detail in the chapter on the Borders trade. It has been demonstrated, however, that both towns saw a distinctive rise in their prosperity during

[24] The Dumfries Standard, 2.9.63.
[25] The Dumfries Standard, 14.10.63.

the 1860s, and it is the assertion of this thesis that, allied with similar prosperity in Yorkshire and the Scottish Borders, the American Civil War was, to a great degree, responsible for this prosperity. This effect was primarily through the impetus which was provided for woollen manufacturers to take advantage of the high cotton prices created by the Cotton Famine.

b) The Cotton Trade

While never an important centre of the British cotton industry, Dumfries and Galloway was nevertheless home to a very small level of cotton manufacturing. Based mainly in Gatehouse-of-Fleet and Annan, the industry survived until the 1840s, and was in permanent decline thereafter. A number of firms continued in business beyond this period, however, but it has been argued that the American Civil War was responsible for these firms' ultimate decline.[26] The cotton industry of Annan was deeply affected by the Cotton Famine, as illustrated by the trade reports of the Annandale Observer. The first illustration of distress in Annan as a result of the Cotton Famine was indicated in late 1862, when the Provost called a public meeting for the purpose of "taking into consideration the best method of relieving those who are in want at the present time in Annan."[27] The meeting, which was held in Annan Mechanics' Institute, was attended by sixty people. One factory owner, Mr Waugh, described how "for some time past they had been working at the mill only one and three-quarter days in the week."[28] A week later, the Observer noted that a soup kitchen had been established for "the cotton operatives, who are now nearly quite unemployed."[29] After 1863, business began to pick up, with the

[26] See an anonymous pamphlet, The Cotton Industry in Dumfries and Galloway, Dumfries and Galloway Collection, Pamphlet DG (6)p.
[27] The Annandale Observer, 27.11.62.
[28] The Annandale Observer, 4.12.62.
[29] The Annandale Observer, 11.12.62.

Observer commenting that the factories were working three and a half days per week.[30] By the middle of 1864, the Observer reported that trade was back to normal levels: "We are glad to learn that there is now a prospect that the long-suffering cotton spinners will henceforward enjoy the blessing of constant employment. Yarn of the finest number is now being spun in our mill from cotton of the best quality."[31] Despite this, however, Donnachie described how Annan Cotton Mill, which employed sixty people on 7500 spindles in 1857, "slowly succumbed [after the 1860s], probably due to the cotton famine caused by the American Civil War."[32] This suggests that Annan's cotton industry developed in the same way as the Scottish cotton industry as a whole. Robertson described how the Cotton Famine did affect Scotland hard, but did not ultimately destroy the industry. Instead, he claimed that labour force problems and a lack of enterprise caused the ultimate decline of the industry.[33] The fact that cotton manufacture ended in Annan in 1890 suggests that while the Civil War undoubtedly damaged both the Annan, and the Scottish, cotton industry, it was but one factor which led to the long-term decline of the industry.[34]

The effect of the American Civil War on the cotton trade of Great Britain was also felt by individuals in the region who had a trading relationship with America. One such company was Messrs M & A Maxwell of Liverpool which had links with Dumfriesshire through two of its partners, Wellwood and Alexander Maxwell. The firm imported cotton and tobacco from the Southern States of America, and through the correspondence of Wellwood Maxwell and his nephew and third partner, Maxwell Hyslop of Liverpool, much comment was made upon the events of the Civil War and its influence on their trade. One of Wellwood Maxwell's contacts in America, J. Boorman Johnston Ho, wrote to him on

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30 The Annandale Observer, 22.1.63.
31 The Annandale Observer, 9.6.64.
32 Donnachie, 'South West Scotland', p. 28.
33 Robertson, 'Scottish Cotton Industry', p. 28.
34 Donnachie, 'South West Scotland', p. 28.

28th December, 1860, warning of the troubles in South Carolina.[35] Maxwell wrote to his nephew, Maxwell Hyslop, clearly concerned about the effect of the troubles on cotton receipts, commenting that:

> I fear should the Carolinians act offensively against Fort Sumter, it will be the commencement of a civil war, and hasten the junction of the other slave states with South Carolina. Still I can scarcely believe there can be so complete a break up of the Union, but there is no saying, as the thinking men & men of property may be pounded in by the great sways of the People who have little or nothing to lose & let their passion get the better of any judgement they have regardless of the consequences.[36]

This letter provides a telling insight into Maxwell's attitudes towards the political judgement of those without education and property.

Correspondence continued between the two partners throughout the Civil War, with particularly interesting comment occurring in January 1862, when Hyslop discussed the benefits which the firm could gain as a result of the Cotton Famine. He suggested buying into the Lancashire-Yorkshire Railway as "Lancashire and Yorkshire are affected more than any other by the short cotton supply and if this continues they may be depressed to a point worth taking them."[37] Later that month, Hyslop also declared that he was against British intervention in the American Civil War for business reasons, and in March 1864, he hinted at involvement in blockade-running activities.[38] This correspondence is interesting for two reasons. Firstly, it provides an insight into the attitudes of Scottish businessmen towards the Civil War, when their business was tied up in the Confederacy. More importantly, however, it illustrates that there was more Dumfriesshire involvement

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35 Letter from J. Boorman Johnstone Ho to Wellwood Maxwell, 28th Dec 1860, New York. Wellwood Maxwell Letters, Dumfries Archives, Ref: GGD 92/6.

36 Letter from Wellwood Maxwell to Maxwell Hyslop, 11th Jan 1861. Wellwood Maxwell Letters, Dumfries Archives, Ref: GGD 92/6.

37 Letter from Maxwell Hyslop to Wellwood Maxwell. 13th Jan 1862. Wellwood Maxwell Letters, Dumfries Archives, Ref: GGD 92/7.

38 Letters from Maxwell Hyslop to Wellwood Maxwell, 24th Jan 1862. Wellwood Maxwell Letters, Dumfries Archives, Ref: GGD 92/7; and 10 Mar 1864, Wellwood Maxwell Letters, Ref: GGD 92/8.

in the cotton trade than is immediately apparent, and that local interest in the American War was occasionally stimulated by business interests elsewhere in Great Britain.

The Cotton Famine therefore affected Dumfriesshire in a number of ways. Firstly, the Famine in Lancashire stimulated an enthusiastic campaign in Dumfriesshire, which organised the collection of subscriptions to alleviate the suffering of the unemployed cotton operatives. We have seen that this charity was based only partly upon altruism, because the county realised that their own agricultural prosperity relied upon the prosperity of the manufacturing districts of the North-West of England. The second effect of the Cotton Famine was to create prosperity in the woollen industries of Dumfries and Langholm. The most likely way in which this effect was manifested was through the switch in demand towards woollen goods, as cotton became scarce and prices increased. With regard to the possible influence which this local prosperity had upon Civil War attitudes, we have seen that the Annan cotton industry helped to mitigate these prosperous conditions. The next section will show how the negative effects which the Cotton Famine caused for local agricultural conditions also weakened the prosperity of the region.

The mid-nineteenth century was a prosperous time for agriculture in Scotland, with increasing mechanisation and efficiency. Dumfriesshire mirrored the wider Scottish picture during the mid-nineteenth century, experiencing great agricultural prosperity. Reverend John Gillespie, in his description of the Dumfriesshire region in 1869, listed the factors which improved agriculture in Dumfriesshire between 1844 and 1869. He described drainage as being a major factor, along with greater soil productivity and the introduction of artificial manures. He also mentioned improved communications, such as the railways and the steamboat link between Annan and Liverpool. In addition, he praised the liberality of landlords in the region, and the beneficial effect of the various agricultural associations.[39] The most recent treatment of Dumfries and Galloway agriculture is the work of Campbell, who examined the agricultural development of the region from the eighteenth century to 1914. He described how most of the industrial change which transformed Scotland during the Industrial Revolution bypassed Dumfriesshire, because of its isolated position and the geographical barrier of the Southern Uplands.[40] The region did benefit from industrialisation, however, because of the markets which were provided for agricultural produce in the urban centres of Britain. Scottish agricultural prosperity peaked in the 1860s followed by a severe agricultural depression which intensified during the 1870s. This depression was postponed by the American Civil War, which hindered the corn and cattle trades of the Midwest region of America, therefore reducing American exports to Britain.[41] It will be seen, however, that the Civil War did not have such an advantageous effect on the agricultural industry of Dumfriesshire, which suffered as demand from cotton-starved Lancashire disappeared, and as cheap American pork imports flooded into Britain.

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[39] Gillespie, 'Agriculture' In Transactions, pp. 270-325.

[40] Campbell, Owners and Occupiers, p. 5.

[41] Symon, Scottish Farming, p. 189, p. 190; Lenman, Economic History, p. 194.

There were a number of important agricultural products in Dumfriesshire, with the cattle and pork trades being the most important. The pork trade, a seasonal trade operating between November and March, was relatively new to Dumfriesshire, but was an extremely important industry. Gillespie described how, during the 1860s, "there are nearly 1000 more pigs in Dumfriesshire than in any other county in Scotland."[42] In 1867, the Dumfries and Galloway Standard stated that "during the winter and beginning of spring pork forms a very important item in the agricultural produce of the three counties whose shores are laved by the waters of the Solway . . . Pork may be said to be the staple trade in the district during the winter months."[43] Grain constituted a significant part of the agricultural produce of the region, but Gillespie pointed out that it was "not as important an export as pork and cattle."[44] This was because it was predominantly used as fodder for livestock. Sheep also constituted a large part of the economy, with mutton and lamb sales, as well as wool. It will become clear that some produce was affected more by the American Civil War than others. The pork trade suffered most, mainly because its season coincided with the effects of the Cotton Famine which led to reduced demand for bacon in the cotton-starved manufacturing districts, and from increased exports of bacon from the Northern States of America. All other produce was badly affected too, with the exception of wool, which benefited from the Cotton Famine.

The Reliance of Dumfriesshire Agriculture upon Lancashire Demand

The Cotton Famine did not directly affect Dumfriesshire, apart from the small effect upon the Annan cotton industry, but its indirect effects were very important. For its food, Lancashire relied upon the Dumfriesshire farmers, and when the Lancashire cotton operatives were no longer able to demand agricultural produce, the farmers of

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42 Gillespie, 'Agriculture', p. 315.
43 The Dumfries Standard, 3.4.67.
44 Gillespie, 'Agriculture', p. 295.

Dumfriesshire consequently suffered. It is therefore necessary to examine the important links between Lancashire and Dumfriesshire. The advent of steam navigation in the 1830s transformed the agricultural economy of South-West Scotland, which until then had been suffering as a result of the physical distance from major markets. The cattle trade was a major beneficiary, as were other articles of produce which could now be sent to the manufacturing areas of north-west England:

> the old links across the Solway and the importance of Whitehaven and even more so of Liverpool as markets, were strengthened. By the 1840s steam vessels plied regularly to the Mersey ... Perishable goods, which could not easily be sent by the old methods of transport, were able to go by the new, notably fish and game to the north-west of England.[45]

The extent to which Dumfriesshire was dependent upon the manufacturing areas of north-west England for the sale of its produce, can also be seen from the discussions which took place at meetings called to debate the subject of sending subscriptions to Lancashire during the Cotton Famine. These meetings give us an insight into the fears expressed about the effects which the Cotton Famine could have on agriculture in the region. Mr Hope Johnstone, M.P. for Dumfriesshire, stated at the Court-House in Dumfries on 3rd December, 1862, that their district "was so far dependent for its prosperity on the north-western parts of England, and that these parts could not be long depressed without our feeling it in this quarter."[46]

The local newspapers regularly pointed out that the prosperity which cotton brought to the manufacturing areas also led to an increase in demand for agricultural produce, and the prosperity of areas like Dumfriesshire. When the Famine began to take hold, realisation that this would signal problems for Dumfriesshire quickly set in, as we have seen in our discussion of the Lancashire subscription movement. This realisation led

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45 Campbell, Owners and Occupiers, p. 56.

46 The Dumfries Herald, 5.12.62.

many to argue in favour of financial help for the manufacturing districts. The Courier also stated that:

> this is mainly an agricultural district; at few rural gatherings do we not hear the opinion expressed that agriculture and manufactures are inseparably connected and go hand in hand together, and that sentiment is invariably cheered: let something more than barren cheers now stamp our approval, and let the landlord and the farmer by a liberal opening of the purse show their connection with the manufacturing operatives.[47]

This demonstrates the importance which farmers and landowners assigned to the Lancashire market. From their discussions we can see that the support for subscriptions was closely tied to the acceptance that without money, the Lancashire operatives would be unable to purchase Dumfriesshire produce, and the region would itself suffer greatly from the Cotton Famine.

The Dumfriesshire Cattle Trade and the Civil War

It has already been noted that the cattle trade of Dumfriesshire benefited greatly by the introduction of steam navigation, and the markets which this provided in north-west England. The ability of farmers to fatten their cattle at home and then send them to Liverpool, along with the development of auction marts, served to greatly improve the prospects of the trade.[48] The growing reliance of Dumfriesshire on the industrial regions of England meant, however, that fluctuations in industrial prosperity would inevitably affect agricultural prosperity too.

The cattle sales in Dumfries were held in the Whitesands area of Dumfries, on the banks of the river Nith. McDowall illustrated the fluctuating trade in cattle on the 'Sands' in the 1850s and 1860s, by showing the number of cattle exposed for sale each year:

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47 The Dumfries Courier, 18.11.62.

48 Campbell, Owners and Occupiers, p. 56.

Year	Head of Cattle	Year	Head of Cattle
1854	28,184	**1861**	22,186
1855	31,552	**1862**	23,564
1856	28,876	**1863**	20,264
1857	24,625	**1864**	17,974
1858	22,605	**1865**	9,605
1859	22,129	**1866**	5,907
1860	20,405	**1867**	15,723

Table 6.3: Dumfries Cattle Sales 1854-1867 (abridged from McDowall, History of Dumfries, 782.)

The most interesting statistics arise when we look at the Civil War period. In 1863, during the Cotton Famine, the number of exposed cattle fell drastically and continued downwards in 1864. Figures slumped to 9605 in 1865, but this can be explained completely by the outbreak of Rinderpest cattle disease in 1865.[49] In March 1863, the Standard commented upon the poor cattle market at the Whitesands, stating that "few lots have been exposed on Dumfries Sands, and for these there was no demand . . . During the month the number exposed has been 83; for the corresponding period of last year it was 100 head."[50] When demand falls, one would normally expect prices to fall as a result, but such a fall failed to occur, with prices remaining steady at between £7 10s and £10 for two year old Galloways throughout 1860 and 1863. This can be explained by the fall in exports of beef from America because of the War, which held up prices in Britain.[51]

The Dumfriesshire cattle trade had strong links with the north of England. Gillespie described how "butchers and dealers from the populous towns in the north of England often purchase largely at [Dumfries and Lockerbie] sales."[52] It was therefore inevitable that the Lancashire Cotton Famine would have an impact upon the

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[49] McDowall, History of Dumfries, p. 782; Symon, Scottish Farming, p. 184.
[50] The Dumfries Standard, 11.3.63.
[51] The Dumfries Standard, 25.6.62, 5.11.62.
[52] Gillespie, 'Agriculture', p. 313.

Dumfriesshire cattle trade. In March, 1862, the Galloway Agricultural Society held its Bull Show in Castle Douglas. At the dinner at the Commercial Hotel, the chairman of the society, Mr Wellwood Herries Maxwell of Munches, commented that, "when the mills and workshops of Lancashire were not in full employment farmers could not get their beef and mutton sold, and prices must go down."[53] In August 1862, in a review of the cattle trade, the Standard argued that:

> the great stagnation of trade in the manufacturing districts, inasmuch as it has a very marked effect upon the consumption of butcher meat, is also to be noted as a cause of the dullness in sales of cattle ... with an improvement of the times in Lancashire and other places where distress prevails to an alarming extent, we have reason to expect an increase in the demand for fat stock. The dullness in the cotton trade has affected other branches of industry and trade to a great degree, and in this way the business in cattle has been influenced indirectly as well as directly.[54]

Clearly, the trade figures for cattle illustrate that there was a falling off of demand during the Cotton Famine. We have seen that the north-west of England was a major market for this produce, and we can therefore conclude that the Cotton Famine caused this reduced level of demand. This is reinforced by the number of newspaper commentaries which attributed the Cotton Famine as the predominant cause.

The Dumfriesshire Pork Trade and the Civil War

The pork trade represented the most striking effect of the American Civil War upon the agriculture of Dumfriesshire. We have already mentioned that pork represented a very important part of the local economy, especially in the winter and early spring. Lancashire was a major consumer of Dumfriesshire bacon, and the trade was therefore severely hit by the Cotton Famine and the distress that ensued. In this section we will

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53 The Dumfries Standard, 19.3.62; Maxwell was a local landowner and Whig, who became M.P. for Kirkcudbrightshire between 1868 and 1874.

54 The Dumfries Standard, 6.8.62.

examine the pork trade, which comprised meat, and then look at the trade in pigs, which involved trade in live animals.

The figures for pork sales during the American Civil War illustrate the detrimental effect which the War had on this trade. This is best seen by examining the top prices at the Dumfries pork markets between 1861 and 1864, in Table 6.4, in which we can see that at the height of the Cotton Famine, in 1862-63, prices fell back sharply:

Year	Top Prices per Stone
1861-2	6s 6d - 7s 0d
1862-3	5s 4d - 6s 2d
1863-4	6s 3d - 7s 5d

Table 6.4: Top Prices for Dumfries Pork, per Stone, 1861-1864 (the Dumfries Standard, 8.4.63 and 6.4.64.)

Annan pork markets also exhibited a similar trend, which can be seen by comparing the November prices of 1861 and 1862. In 1861 prices ranged between 6s. 6d. to 6s. 8d., compared with 5s. 0d. to 5s. 6d. in 1862.[55] Finally, the same trend can be recognised in the figures provided by McDowall. He recorded the trade figures of the largest bacon-curer in Dumfries, William Bell. The average price per stone which Bell paid for his pork provides more evidence for the view that 1862-63 was a bad season:

Year	Prices per Stone
1860-61	7s. 1/2d.
1861-62	6s. 6d.
1862-63	5s. 5d.
1863-64	6s. 81/4d.
1864-65	6s. 9d.

Table 6.5: Bacon Prices per Stone of William Bell, Dumfries, 1860-1865 (McDowall, History of Dumfries, p. 784.)

[55] The Annandale Observer, November 1862.

This slump in the pork trade during 1862 and 1863 was clearly due to the effects of the Civil War. We shall see that the effects of the War were two-fold: firstly, because of reduced consumer demand in Lancashire as a result of the Cotton Famine; and secondly, because of increased exports of cheap pork from the Northern States, which lowered demand for the more expensive Dumfriesshire product in Lancashire. The Standard demonstrated the importance of the Lancashire link by stating, "that pork has been extensively consumed in Lancashire, is to be learned from the fact that it is almost the only kind of animal food that is purchased there by the now starving cotton workers."[56] The Standard hoped that "as supplies of cotton from various parts of the world come in, trade in Lancashire and other districts will revive and the demand for bacon will then increase."[57] The Lancastrians' love of bacon did not, however, lead them to continue their purchases of the Dumfriesshire product. Instead, they looked for a cheaper alternative.

As demand for Dumfriesshire bacon fell in Lancashire as a result of reduced wages, the operatives inevitably looked for cheaper bacon, and this is where American imports of cheap bacon exacerbated the problem. Northern pork producers had previously supplied the Southern States with their product, but with the outbreak of war, they had to find another market for their pork, and consequently Britain became such a market. American pork was cheaper and inferior to the Dumfriesshire product, but the impoverished operatives naturally bought the cheaper American product. In January 1863, the Standard printed figures on American and Canadian trade to Liverpool from the Liverpool Customs' Bill of Entry. These provided statistics for the six months ending 30th November, 1862, and included 46,002 casks of American lard (94,529 hundredweight), and 6,804 tierces of ham (29,767 hundredweight), which was equivalent to the produce of 83,000 pigs. Bacon imports consisted of 46,183 boxes (150,095 hundredweight) equivalent to 120,000 pigs.[58]

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[56] The Dumfries Standard, 3.12.62.
[57] The Dumfries Standard, 11.3.63.
[58] The Dumfries Standard, 7.1.63.

The extent to which these American imports damaged the Dumfriesshire pork trade was a contentious issue at the time. Some claimed it had equal influence with the fall in Lancashire's demand, while others minimised it as a factor. The Standard was one of the former, arguing that "large quantities are being shipped to Britain, and even in this town of Dumfries, American is sold at a cheaper rate than home-cured pork. While this extra supply gluts every market, there is not the demand that would have been in ordinary circumstances."[59] The Courier agreed, arguing that "pork, which is an important item in the Stewartry [of Kirkcudbright], especially on small farms, is the only description of butcher meat which is low in price, owing no doubt to the large importations of that article from America."[60] In its review of the pork trade of Dumfries and Galloway during 1862 and 1863, the Courier stated that:

> though this district is the most widely famed in the kingdom for its bacon curing, the American bacon came into competition with it, not only in the markets of the south but in the local market, as a great deal of bacon from beyond the Atlantic had been sold in Dumfries during the winter ... the improvement in the quality of American Bacon, together with the lower price than that of home cured has been an inducement to those who could buy but little bacon to prefer the cheapest, and the consumption of home cured bacon was diminished more than it would otherwise have been.[61]

The Annandale Observer was more reluctant to give credence to the idea that it was the American Civil War which was damaging the local pork trade. In November 1862, the paper stated that "pork markets have opened this season at lower rates than they have been accustomed to do of late years," but then went on, in the same article, to state that "one of the most remarkable features resulting from the cotton famine, and the destitution consequent thereon is, that as yet it has not in any material degree affected the

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59 The Dumfries Standard, 3.12.62.

60 The Dumfries Courier, 2.12.62.

61 The Dumfries Courier, 14.4.63.

price of agricultural produce."[62] In December, the paper claimed that bacon exports from America were down and that it could not, therefore, understand why pork prices were so low. This article led to a series of recriminations over the issue beginning with a letter from a pork farmer calling himself 'Humiliate,' which was published in the Annandale Observer and the Dumfries Standard. The farmer argued that bacon imports from America were not down and that this was the factor which was damaging the pork trade locally.[63] The Annandale Observer reacted to this letter, arguing that:

> taking the unfavourable harvest, the Lancashire distress, American war, and every other circumstance into consideration, we maintain that there was no valid reason why pork should be relatively so disproportionate in price to beef. Every one acquainted with American business knows that large quantities of pork and beef are fed and salted down in the Southern States ... We shall continue, therefore, to argue that the reduced price of pork is not *solely* owing to the withdrawal of supply by the Northern and Southern States of America.[64]

The Observer later went on to argue that it was both "the large American import, together with the inability of our operative population to consume much in their present unoccupied state" that was causing the low price of pork.[65] The paper argued that imports of bacon from America had been larger in the previous year, yet prices had not slumped at home, therefore it could not be solely the import factor which was damaging the economy. The Observer's resolute stance is difficult to explain, as the only basis for its views appeared to be its correspondence with a Cincinnati farmer, who advised the paper that Britain would "get a very diminished supply of pork" from America, as a result of the Civil War.[66] As the paper offered no alternative explanation for the slump in pork prices, however, one can only tentatively suggest that the paper may have enjoyed taking a somewhat

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[62] The Annandale Observer, 20.11.62.
[63] The Dumfries Standard, 14.1.63.
[64] The Annandale Observer, 1.1.63.
[65] The Annandale Observer, 15.1.63.
[66] The Annandale Observer, 1.1.63.

independent view of things. In many ways the disagreement which the Observer expressed seemed to be a question of semantics: all the commentators accepted that the American bacon imports were an influence, but merely differed with respect to the significance they assigned to this factor.

The trade in pigs was secondary to the fresh pork trade in Dumfriesshire, but was still significant. The market for live pigs was also concentrated in the north of England.[67] Statistics for the pig trade operating at Dumfries Markets show that during the peak of distress in Lancashire, November and December, 1862, top prices did drop markedly:

Year	Pig Prices
Jan 1860	12s - 15s
Jan 1861	13s - 17s
Jan 1862	10s - 14s
Jan 1863	10s - 14s
Jan 1864	14s - 20s

Table 6.6: Dumfries Pig Prices, 1860-1864 (Dumfries Standard: 11.1.60, 9.1.61, 8.1.62, 7.1.63; Dumfries Herald: Nov 62-Feb 63.)

Like the pork trade, the trade in live pigs was also affected by the War in America because of the reliance of the trade upon the Lancashire market. We can see how the pattern of prices mirrored the trade fluctuations in the cotton districts and led to a depression in the trade.

The evidence presented here convincingly supports the assertion that the American Civil War caused the slump in the Dumfriesshire pork and pig trade. Firstly, we have seen that the price of pork, bacon, and live pigs fell sharply in the 1862-3 season (November 1862 to March 1863) which coincided directly with the most severe winter period of the Lancashire Cotton Famine. Secondly, it has been shown that Lancashire was Dumfriesshire's primary market for live pigs, and bacon sales. In addition, cheaper

[67] Gillespie, 'Agriculture', p. 314.

American imports of bacon exacerbated the problem for Dumfriesshire pork-farmers, undercutting their prices at a time when consumers had little money. It was therefore clearly the case that the price falls of Dumfriesshire pork were a result of demand-side and supply-side factors brought about by the American Civil War.

The Dumfriesshire Grain Trade and the Civil War

Dumfriesshire was a significant arable area, producing a wide range of crops.[68] While grains were not an important local export to the rest of Britain, it does appear that there was a slump in prices during the Cotton Famine. Initially, the war in America served to raise prices because of the prospect of reduced American imports, and again during the Trent incident, when war was envisaged between America and Britain. The Cotton Famine reversed this trend, however, indirectly affecting the grain trade as the demand for fodder fell as a result of reduced demand for cattle and sheep.

Statistics are available from the local Dumfries markets of 1860 to 1865, and the Fiars court for the same period. The Dumfries markets demonstrated that the prices of the three main crops of wheat, barley and oats reacted differently, although the prices of all three fell during the Cotton Famine. Looking at wheat prices firstly, we can see that prices fell throughout the period, but that they show a particular fall between 1863 and 1864:

Month & Year	Price	Month & Year	Price
Jan 1862	7s -8s	**June1863**	5s 9d - 6s 6d
June1862	6s 9d - 7s	**Jan 1864**	4s 9d - 5s 6d
Jan 1863	6s - 6s 9d	**June1864**	5s 3d - 5s 6d

Table 6.7: Dumfries Wheat Prices, 1862-1864 (Dumfries Standard: 8.1.62, 18.6.62, 7.1.63, 6.1.64.)

68 Gillespie, 'Agriculture', p. 290.

Barley sales showed a similar trend, falling from a range of 4s. 4d. to 4s. 5d. in January 1862, to 3s. 9d. to 4s. 3d. in June 1862. Prices rallied during 1863 but fell back again afterwards. Exactly the same trend can be noted for oats.[69] The Fiars represent a more reliable set of statistics, given that they are prices struck for the whole of the previous year. Dumfries Fiars show falls in the prices of all crops between 1861 and 1862.[70]

As with pork and cattle, local commentators blamed market depression on the distress amongst the unemployed cotton operatives in Lancashire. In July 1862, the Annandale Observer described the low prices as having "[their] origin partly, no doubt, in the want of demand and the distress prevailing amongst a very large class of the British empire - the operatives, the farmer's best customers."[71] The Dumfries Courier agreed, suggesting that "the limited demand is mainly attributed to the falling away in the quantity now required for consumption in the manufacturing districts."[72] In December 1862, it saw "little prospect of any improvement in grain prices for some time to come, so long as the Cotton Famine and destitution lasts."[73] It did not have much confidence in a pick-up in trade in 1863 either, because of the problems in Lancashire: "there are some . . . who appear to look forward to an improvement in prices further on in spring; we regret we cannot lead ourselves to the same conclusion till an end is seen to the American War, and our operatives are again in full employ."[74] In addition to the grain market, the Courier commented on the effect of the War on the potato trade in the area:

> the distress in Lancashire has had a curious effect upon the potato market. In the manufacturing districts flukes are the favourite table potatoes of the wealthy, while the poorer classes in their time of privation have preferred the cheaper protestants to regents; in consequence, the demand for regents is dull, and holders here find difficulty in obtaining a market for their stocks.[75]

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69 The Dumfries Standard, 8.1.62, 18.6.62, 7.1.63, 6.1.64.
70 The Dumfries Standard, 25.2.63.
71 The Annandale Observer, 17.7.62.
72 The Dumfries Courier, 1.7.62.
73 The Dumfries Courier, 2.12.62.
74 The Dumfries Courier, 3.2.63.
75 The Dumfries Courier, 13.1.63.

We have already seen how the American Civil War prevented a slump in Scottish agriculture in the 1860s by restricting American exports of grain, and therefore holding British prices up. This was a factor recognised by local commentators. The Annandale Observer was concerned that a cessation in the fighting across the Atlantic would have a deflationary effect on prices, which was more worrying given the lack of demand in the market.[76] The grain trade was clearly experiencing a dual effect from the American Civil War. On the one hand, prices were buoyant as a result of falling American imports of grain, but the trade was also suffering as a result of the Cotton Famine in Lancashire. As a result, we have seen that local farmers were unsure as to whether they should welcome a cessation in American hostilities or hope for more conflict. The grain trade therefore offers us a very interesting example of how economic factors can affect perceptions towards a conflict such as the American Civil War.

Dumfriesshire Sheep and Wool Sales and the Civil War

Sheep farmers also relied upon the northern markets of England for the sale of their produce. The introduction of steam navigation served to benefit the trade in sheep to the extent that the trade began to surpass the cattle trade in the region. As more and more sheep were shipped to Liverpool, Campbell described how there was an increased demand for turnips to feed the sheep, and that sheep prices began to rise as the trade began to be preferred to the cattle trade.[77] McDowall stated that "every year immense flocks that are never shown on the Sands are sent from the Dumfries railway station, chiefly to Liverpool, Carlisle, Penrith, Appleby, Preston, and Newcastle."[78] He illustrated the numbers of sheep exported to these markets between 1859 and 1868 as follows:

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[76] The Annandale Observer, 17.7.62.
[77] Campbell, Owners and Occupiers, pp. 58-9.
[78] McDowall, History of Dumfries, p. 783.

Year	Exports	Year	Exports
1859:	43,932	**1864:**	39,811
1860:	39,460	**1865:**	47,105
1861:	46,007	**1866:**	35,076
1862:	40,691	**1867:**	69,620
1863:	37,937	**1868:**	65,239

Table 6.8: Dumfries Sheep Exports to Northern England, 1859-1868 (McDowall, History of Dumfries, p. 783.)

These figures clearly show that the number of exported sheep fell markedly in 1863. In addition, the Standard noted, in December 1862, that "though very high prices are quoted for beef and mutton, these are confined to the best meat; for middling and inferior qualities the demand is slack and prices moderate, especially in Lancashire, the explanation of which is unfortunately too obvious."[79] The fall in the prices of sheep, and the fact that Lancashire represented a significant market for Dumfriesshire mutton and lamb leads us to the conclusion that the Cotton Famine damaged the sheep market.

The sheep farmers of Dumfriesshire were also affected by the Cotton Famine in respect to increased prices for wool. As cotton became scarce as a result of restricted supplies from the Confederate States of America, wool was sought as a substitute, and prices therefore rose. We have seen how this affected the woollen manufacturing sector, but referring to the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland's figures, we can see that this was also the case for wool producers:

	Laid Cheviot	**White Cheviot**	**Laid Highland**
1862	18s 6d - 26s	30s - 37s	11s 6d - 16s
1863	25s 6d - 31s	38s - 42s	15s 3d - 17s 6d
1864	31s - 39s	47s - 54s	17s 6d - 20s
1865	23s - 30s	44s - 45s	15s - 17s

Table 6.9: Scottish Wool Prices, per stone, 1862-1865 (abridged from Transactions of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland 50 (1938), 317.)

[79] The Dumfries Standard, 23.12.62.

The above figures represent the prices for a stone of wool, and clearly show the rising price of wool as cotton became scarce after 1862, and its fall following the resumption of supplies. The Dumfries Standard explained why the price of wool was rising:

> the high value of cotton keeps wool up, and all sorts are being sold at good prices. Manufacturers are making all-wool goods which were formerly of cotton and wool mixed. This is increasing the consumption and demand for wool, and prices, it is thought, are not yet at their maximum. [80]

Business at wool markets was brisk, with the Standard commenting that "it is seldom that so large a portion of the wool of the district is sold at the end of July as it has been during the month just ended."[81] In addition to the substitution of wool for cotton, the wool trade was also buoyed by increased exports, with the Inverness Sheep and Wool Fair commenting upon the increased exports of wool to America.[82]

Conclusion

The year 1863 saw a slump throughout Dumfriesshire in the agricultural trades. Prices fell significantly for pork, live pigs and sheep, whilst sales of cattle and grain also fell. The only buoyant market was the wool trade which experienced a significant rise in prices in 1863 and 1864. The American Civil War was the main cause of these trends, with its influence being felt through the effects of the Cotton Famine and the impact of the War upon the export trade of the United States. The Famine led to severe destitution amongst Lancashire cotton operatives during the latter part of 1862 and most of 1863. This suffering caused the slump in the agricultural trade of Dumfriesshire because of the reliance of the region upon Lancashire and its prosperity, a fact which was clearly demonstrated in the overwhelming support given to the sending of aid from Dumfriesshire to Lancashire.

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[80] The Dumfries Standard, 8.10.62.
[81] The Dumfries Standard, 6.8.62.
[82] The Dumfries Standard, 16.7.62.

The second major impact of the War was upon the American export trade. Firstly, a fall in beef imports from America helped to hold up beef prices in Great Britain. This explains the paradoxical situation of falling demand for beef and stable beef prices. The same phenomenon existed in the grain trade where prices generally held up as a result of falling supplies from America, except for a slight fall between 1862 and 1863. This price fall in the middle of the War was due to a reduction in demand for grain as fodder, as sales of cattle, pigs and sheep began to suffer. While there was a fall in American exports of beef and grain, however, the 1860s saw increased exports of pork from America. The American product was cheaper and inferior to the Dumfriesshire product, but the impoverished Lancashire operatives chose to buy the cheaper product, further compounding the pressure upon the Dumfriesshire pork trade. The only benefit which the war provided for Dumfriesshire was the effect on the region's wool trade. As a result of the lack of cotton, increased demand for wool products arose both at home in Britain, as well as in America, where demand for army clothing existed as a further influence of the War upon Britain.

This analysis proves that it was not only the industrial areas of Britain that were adversely affected by the Civil War, but that non-industrial areas were also indirectly affected, and deserve investigation. It will also prove crucial as a background for the next chapter, which will examine Dumfriesshire attitudes towards the American Civil War. Clearly affected by the conflict, the next chapter will ascertain the extent to which economic conditions influenced political judgements.

Chapter 7: Dumfriesshire Attitudes towards the American Civil War

When examining British attitudes towards the American Civil War, it is easy to concentrate too heavily upon the industrial regions of the country, especially those areas which are well known for having suffered as a result of the War. To ignore the rest of the country would be to miss out on the wide and varied experience of Britain during the Civil War, however, and we will see that the county of Dumfriesshire offers us much in this respect. The experience of Dumfriesshire during the American Civil War is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, we have seen in Chapter three that despite the existence of strong landed and agricultural interests, the town of Dumfries was home to a strong Liberal tradition throughout the nineteenth century, and witnessed the election of a radical-Liberal Member of Parliament, William Ewart, and the organisation of a strong Chartist movement in the 1830s. It is therefore important for us to examine how this Liberal culture reacted to the American Civil War and the social and political issues which it raised. This will prove vital to the examination of Liberal opinion in this thesis. Secondly, the existence of a landed interest in Dumfriesshire meant that there was significant local support for the Conservative Party, resulting in the election of a Conservative M.P. Hope-Johnston. This will help to illustrate the extent to which Conservative opinion in Dumfriesshire echoed that in Scotland as a whole, as well as the interesting contrast which it will provide for our examination of Liberal attitudes in Dumfries. Thirdly, we have seen the effect which the American Civil War had upon the Dumfriesshire economy in the previous chapter. It is now vital that we examine the impact which the economic experience of Dumfriesshire had upon the attitude of the people of the county towards the Civil War. We have seen that the small textile industry in the region was given a boost by the War through the extra demand which was created for woollen goods, but that adverse effects were also felt in the region as an indirect result of the Civil War. The Cotton Famine which crippled the Lancashire economy led to a downturn in the

Dumfriesshire agricultural trade as a result of falling demand from Lancashire, one of the region's most important customers. Local commentators were quick to recognise that the War was a major factor in this downturn. This chapter will therefore attempt to ascertain whether political motives or economic motives were more important to local commentators in their formulation of Civil War attitudes.

In examining Dumfriesshire reactions towards the American Civil War, the main source of information available to us is the local newspaper press, which provides us with a wealth of local information and opinion. In 1860, Dumfries was home to three newspapers, a substantial number for a semi-rural town. The Dumfries and Galloway Courier was the longest serving paper of this period, and was moderately Liberal in its politics. The Dumfries and Galloway Herald and Register was a strong Conservative paper, whilst the Dumfries and Galloway Standard was a Liberal paper, which occasionally showed radical tendencies. We will see that the Civil War attitudes expressed by the Dumfries newspapers were complicated, and appeared at times to be rather illogical. The Tory Herald was pro-South for the duration of the War, while the Liberal Courier and the Liberal-Radical Standard tried to be neutral, and were at times critical of both North and South. The tendency of papers to express Civil War opinions which contrasted with their overall political stances was a common one throughout Britain. Wright, for example, described how in West Yorkshire, the Bradford Observer was "more radical than an exclusive reading of the newspaper's views on the Civil War might suggest,"[1] and that the Leeds Times supported political reform and abolitionism, but was also vociferously pro-South.[2] We will see that, at times, the Dumfries Courier and the Dumfries Standard exhibited similar inconsistencies of opinion.

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[1] Wright, 'Bradford and the Civil War', p. 83.

[2] Wright, 'Leeds and the Civil War', p. 110.

The Pre-Civil War Period : August 1860 - April 1861

The months immediately prior to the outbreak of Civil War in America illustrated the keen interest which local Dumfriesshire commentators were beginning to take in the American troubles, and also showed from the outset the different approaches which the newspapers would take when discussing the American situation. On the one side, Conservative opinion, expressed through the Dumfries Herald, argued that the sectional difficulties were a result of the failures of democracy, a view which would be echoed by Conservative commentators throughout the War.[3] Local Liberal opinion, on the other hand, blamed Southern support for slavery as the cause of the discontent.[4] At this stage secession was not seen as an immediate concern, partly because commentators did not believe that sufficient support existed amongst other Southern States for the stance taken by South Carolina.[5] Secession was inevitable in the future, however, argued the Dumfries Standard, in line with British newspaper opinion as a whole.[6]

Even at this early stage, commentators were beginning to entrench themselves, with the Herald resolute that if secession took place, it was caused by the failures of the American political system, with the republican system coming in for most criticism.[7] In March 1861, however, the paper condemned the American tariff policy as a major cause of secession, three months before the Quarterly Review which, according to Adams, was the first paper to raise the importance of the issue of the tariff.[8] The Herald's criticism of the American political system was reinforced by a lecture entitled 'A Comparison between the British and American Constitutions' delivered by Mr Steel of Annan, a former Provost of Annan, to the Castle-Douglas Mechanics Institution on 13th February, 1861. He concluded

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3 The Dumfries Herald, 16.11.60.
4 The Dumfries Courier, 27.11.60; the Dumfries Standard, 5.12.60.
5 The Dumfries Courier, 27.11.60, 4.12.60.
6 The Dumfries Standard, 5.12.60; Adams, Civil War, vol.1, pp. 36-7.
7 The Dumfries Herald, 1.2.61.
8 The Dumfries Herald, 15.3.61; Adams, Civil War, vol.1, p. 47.

his lecture with the hope that people would not look to America for freedom, when Britain was home to more freedom than anywhere else in the world.[9] These local opinions about the impending failure of American political institutions mirrored those being expressed throughout Britain. Adams described how "British comment was directed to the lesson, taught to the world by the American crisis, of the failure of democratic institutions in *national power*."[10] The Herald's view was consistent with the Tory press elsewhere, and of Tory opinion in general.[11] The Herald did, however, offer its support to a parallel struggle going on in Italy at this time. Describing Garibaldi as a second Wallace, it sympathised with the "cruelties endured by that downtrodden nation,"[12] although it did not go this far in supporting the right of the Southern Confederacy, as an oppressed minority, to secede.

The Liberal papers in Dumfries blamed slavery for causing secession, an issue which was of great interest in Dumfries, where a number of meetings were held on the subject, including a lecture delivered by the prominent American ex-slave and abolitionist, Sarah Parker Remond, on 10th January, 1861, at the Theatre, Dumfries.[13] In her speech, Remond described the opportunities available to the European immigrant in the Northern Free States, which were denied to free blacks. She then went on to explain that British people should help in the abolitionist effort, because the ensuing American difficulties were connecting slavery more closely to Britain, and that while "there had been no lack of sympathy and aid to the patriots Garibaldi, Poerio, and others, . . . there was no race of people needing it more than the negroes." The Standard remarked that "Miss Remond sat down amidst loud and continued applause," indicating the support which existed in

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9 The Kirkcudbrightshire Advertiser and Galloway News, 15.2.61.

10 Adams, Civil War, vol.2, p. 276.

11 Adams, Civil War, vol.2, pp. 277-8.

12 The Dumfries Herald, 31.8.60.

13 The Dumfries Standard, 12.1.61. For an account of the life of Sarah Remond, see Porter, D.B. 'Sarah Parker Remond, Abolitionist and Physician', Journal of Negro History 20 (1935), 287-94.

Dumfries for the abolitionist cause. Local commentators believed that slavery was the cause of the troubles in America, and that emancipation would be the result of any future conflict.

In the months before the commencement of the Civil War, debate was clearly raging amongst Dumfries commentators about the issues which the worsening American situation was forcing them to confront. The main division which arose amongst these commentators was whether American democracy or slavery was the cause of the troubles. Generally, secession was viewed as unlikely at this stage, and Adams illustrated how this view was held throughout Britain, and was the factor which influenced early British support for the North, with Lincoln's election victory seen as heralding the end of slavery.[14] While much opinion tended to be derived from attitudes towards democracy and slavery, however, there was also a growing tendency for the newspapers to consider the American situation in the context of its possible effect upon the British economy and British politics. In the short-term, a War between the northern and southern states was feared because of its consequences on British trade, especially the cotton industry. On the other hand, in the long term it was envisaged that trade with a free-trade Confederacy would benefit Britain, and support for Southern secession therefore began to be established. This illustrates that a number of factors would prove influential upon opinions expressed about the American Civil War.

1861 : Fort Sumter to the Trent Affair

Following Confederate General Beauregard's order to fire upon Fort Sumter, at 4.30 a.m. on 12th April, 1861, the concern amongst Dumfries commentators was the likelihood of the Union being repaired, given that both sides were now at War. The Courier was downcast, clearly envisaging a long struggle: "the prospect now opening is indeed a gloomy

[14] Adams, Civil War, vol.1, pp. 36-7.

one for every lover of peace, of the progress of mankind, and of rational liberty."[15] The paper also alluded to the personal connections which existed between the two countries, when it stated that, "we earnestly trust . . . that our brethren on the other side of the Atlantic be spared the horrors of Civil War,"[16] and underlined the importance of the American struggle to British observers, "who have such strong moral and material interests in the prosperity of that great land in the west throughout which the British language is spoken."[17] This statement encompasses the diverse nature of the links between Scotland and America. The "moral" interests must include the issue of slavery, and perhaps also democracy and the future of both, while "material" interests are self-explanatory, covering the enormous trade links between the two countries. It is interesting too, to note the expression "British language" as this seems to indicate something more than simple spoken tongue. On one level, it is, perhaps, a Scottish newspaper alluding to the influence of Scotland, as well as England, upon America; on a deeper level though, maybe the author is using the term "British language" as a metaphor for the acceptance of a British 'way of life' in America, which included the legal system, religion, education, the political structure, and the cultural identity of America, all of which owed a great deal to their British origins. The importance of this connection was discussed in Chapter one.

At this early stage in the War, slavery proved decisive in preventing commentators from taking firm sides in the conflict. This was generated by the North's unwillingness to declare its support for the abolitionist cause. This uncertainty about the merits of the conflict existed throughout Britain, and continued throughout the War, even after the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863.[18] Given that the various commentators did

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[15] The Dumfries Courier, 30.4.61.
[16] The Dumfries Courier, 23.4.61.
[17] The Dumfries Courier, 30.4.61.
[18] Adams, Civil War, vol.1, p. 68.

not know for certain what the North stood for, they were unwilling to give it their support, even though they were quite definite in their opposition to the Confederate States. As the Standard put it, "were the quarrel between the North and South one in which the former wished to annihilate and the latter to preserve slavery, it would be greatly simplified, and the success of the North would be supremely desirable."[19] Following the North's defeat at the Battle of Manassas on 21st July, 1861, the main concern of the local press in Dumfries continued to be the North's attitude towards slavery. Commentators found it difficult to understand why Lincoln would not embrace the abolitionist cause, given that it would provide him with international support and also provide his own army with a cause to fight for. As the situation stood, the North was seen to be no more moral than the slave-holding South.[20] When Harriet Beecher Stowe criticized the British for failing to side with the North, the Courier argued that since the North did not call for abolition, Britain could not be criticized for refusing to support it. If only the North would embrace the cause, "neither the respect nor the sympathies of this country would be awanting."[21] The North's unwillingness to advocate abolition was described by Owsley as "the death knell of British sympathy based upon the moral righteousness of the northern cause."[22] Commentators were able to feel morally justified in supporting the South.

In the later part of 1861 debates in Dumfries continued to concentrate upon the issue of slavery, and there was a reluctance to offer wholehearted support to the North because of its stance on the issue. On the 11th of October, 1861, the Liberal Member of Parliament for Dumfries, William Ewart, made an address at the Market Hall in the town. Initially he stated that the Southern States should have been allowed to secede from the Union,

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[19] The Dumfries Standard, 15.5.61.
[20] The Dumfries Standard, 21.8.61.
[21] The Dumfries Courier, 17.9.61.
[22] Owsley, King Cotton Diplomacy, p. 206.

quoting De Tocqueville in defence. He denied that he sympathised with the South, claiming that "if we take any side at all or give any opinion we must side with that party which is in favour of freedom, and wishes the emancipation of the slave,"[23] to which he was greeted with cheers from his audience. It is interesting to note that Ewart was making the same point here that Richard Cobden had made in June of the same year. Robbins described how Cobden, at this early stage, "was sympathetic to the legal right of the South to secede . . . he cited Tocqueville on this point, and thought the North unreasonable in treating the Southern States as rebels."[24] Ewart's admiration for Cobden is therefore clear at this stage, as it was throughout the nineteenth century, during which time Ewart was involved with Cobden on a number of issues, including free trade and the peace movement.[25] Slavery was also very much in the public mind, and on the 23rd of September, 1861, a lecture was delivered at Loreburn Street United Presbyterian Church, Dumfries, by Mr William Craft, an escaped slave, on a speaking tour. His lecture was entitled "American Crisis and Slavery, including the account of the extraordinary adventures of Himself and Wife in escaping 1000 miles across the Slave States." The Standard described how the meeting was "crowded to excess, and many had to leave, unable to obtain seats."[26] Mr Craft described slavery as the cause of the war, echoing the earlier comments by the Reverend D.L. Scott of Loreburn Street Church, who said that if the Civil War provided the slave with freedom, the War could be considered a good thing.

Strong feelings on the slavery issue were also provoked following a slavery controversy in America. On August 30th, 1861, General John C. Frémont, Lincoln's commander of the Western Department, issued a proclamation freeing the slaves of

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23 The Dumfries Standard, 12.10.61.
24 Robbins, K. John Bright. London, 1979, p. 157.
25 See Munford, William Ewart, p.114, 126.
26 The Dumfries Standard, 25.9.61.

Missouri. Lincoln disallowed the declaration, because of his fear of alienating Kentucky slave-holders. The Dumfriesshire press were dismayed at Lincoln's decision. The Standard argued that Frémont's actions would have provided just what was needed: an identification of the Northern States with the cause of abolitionism.[27] The Courier saw the Frémont episode as proof that neither North nor South cared about the freedom of the slave and confirmed "the public opinion in this country which regards the fratricidal fight with sorrow, but without sympathy for either side."[28] The slavery issue had emerged as the decisive factor in the formulation of opinions on the American Civil War in Dumfriesshire. The papers were reluctant to support the North because of its refusal to take a stand on the slavery issue, and we have seen how, after the Battle of Bull Run on July 21st 1861, discussion turned to the issue of the North's stance on the slavery issue. William Ewart's speech on October 11th demonstrated the problem faced by local commentators, when he voiced his support for whichever side supported the emancipation of the slave. The Trent affair of November 1861 served to worsen the Northern cause amongst already sceptical Dumfriesshire onlookers.

On November 8th 1861, two Confederate agents Slidell and Mason were discovered on board a British ship, the Trent, on their way to Europe, by an American ship, the San Jacinto. The Northern ship arrested the pair, causing outrage in Great Britain, where it was alleged that the Northern States' act was both dishonourable and illegal. The response in Dumfriesshire was mixed. The Herald argued that the whole issue was a result of American mobocracy, claiming that "the Mob, and the Press of the Mob" were taking advantage of anti-British feeling and agitating for war with Britain.[29] The Standard was the only paper in the area to side with the Northern States over the Trent Affair, an unusual stance within Britain as a whole. The paper criticised the captain of

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[27] The Dumfries Standard, 2.10.61.
[28] The Dumfries Courier, 1.10.61.
[29] The Dumfries Herald, 3.1.62.

the Trent for carrying the two Confederate agents, and argued that "any vessel that was the means of bringing them over was favouring the South at the expense of the North, and thus deviating from the purely neutral ground which we profess to occupy towards both parties."[30] Following the British inquiry into the action, the Standard was disappointed that the issue of whether the Commissioners should have been on board the Trent was not addressed. It accepted the ruling that the seizure of the two agents by the San Jacinto was illegal, however. The paper was confident that President Lincoln would act fairly in the situation, and following the climb down by the Washington Government, the Standard congratulated them on their "wonderful moderation and fairness under the circumstances of the Trent affair," and even described how the "very anti-British [Mr Seward] continued to get out of the difficulty with credit, if not gracefulness."[31] This reaction was also described by Adams, who stated that "the Trent acted to bring to a head and make more clear the British relation to the Civil War in America . . . [and] it resulted in a weakening of the conviction that Seward was unfriendly."[32]

A number of issues arise out of this analysis of the first year of the Civil War. We have seen that there was little support for the South because of its support for slavery, and that support for the Northern cause was tempered by the unwillingness of the North to support the abolitionist cause. Clearly, either side could have gained the support of the Dumfriesshire press if they had relinquished support for slavery. Economic factors did not influence opinions greatly at this stage, as the economic problems which would later plague the different areas of Great Britain were yet to develop. The evidence, however, seems to suggest that the shortage of cotton, both actual and threatened, did not make commentators offer support to the South.[33] In reality, it probably did the opposite.

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[30] The Dumfries Standard, 30.11.61.
[31] The Dumfries Standard, 15.1.62.
[32] Adams, Civil War, vol.1, p. 242.
[33] The Dumfries Standard, 6.11.61.

The extent to which this attitude would remain when the Cotton Famine became worse was yet to be seen, as was the effect of the War on local economic interests and how this influenced attitudes towards the War.

The way in which the American Civil War affected opinions upon democracy and republicanism in Dumfriesshire was three-fold. Firstly, it confirmed the opinion of Tories who disliked the American form of government and felt that it would ultimately result in tyranny. Secondly, it led to disappointment amongst those who had viewed American democracy with interest, if not complete admiration. Finally, the war helped to mould opinions upon the desirability of more democracy within the British system of government. The Tory Herald believed that the War would lead to the wiser elements of American society coming to government and that "dignity and courtesy will then be the more prevailing spirit and tone of the land."[34] The paper believed that the singular fault of American democracy was the lack of intelligent men in high political positions, and the fact that American politics was in the hands of the mob. The Courier was more disappointed in its response to democratic developments. Following President Lincoln's introduction of the passport system and restrictions on press freedom, the paper displayed surprise at the way in which democratic America was "taking very kindly to those restrictions both as regards expression of opinion and freedom of locomotion, which were supposed to be incompatible with free institutions."[35] Later, in February 1862, the Courier described how "the black deeds in constitutional England and despotic Austria are venial compared with those which have been asserted without contradiction to be common in democratic America."[36]

Of the papers discussed, all were critical of democracy in America; either because it was held to be an inherently unstable system, or because it was not managing to deal

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[34] The Dumfries Herald, 27.9.61.
[35] The Dumfries Courier, 10.9.61.
[36] The Dumfries Courier, 4.2.62.

with the difficulties which faced it. Only the Standard refrained from comment at this stage. It is clear that the Standard was in favour of greater democracy at home, however, because of a suggestion which it had made in May 1861. It recognised the economic difficulties which were facing Britain as a result of the War in America, and was also aware that the shortage of cotton would lead to much poverty, despair, and possible disruption. It called for the working classes to be enfranchised in anticipation of the troubles which the American War would bring. It would be too late to wait until afterwards, the Standard maintained, and urged the government to act immediately so that they would not "find it 'too late' to make those concessions which they foolishly thought they could afford to withhold in times of prosperity and peace."[37] The Tory Herald could not have taken a more different view. In September 1861, it described how "the country is exceedingly quiet just now . . . there is not the slightest movement in politics: even that confident tribune, Mr Bright, has sunk out of sight and hearing."[38] Rather than intimating for reform in Great Britain as a result of the American Civil War, the Herald argued that "the breakdown of the American republic has stopped the tongues of demagogues, and is making our people essentially Conservative."[39] This issue of democracy and how it developed in Britain as a result of the American Civil War is one which will develop as we go on.

1862 : Emancipation and Democracy

Dumfriesshire reaction during the second year of the War was dominated by the slavery issue, moves towards mediation in the conflict, and the economic distress caused by the Cotton Famine in Lancashire. Local commentators in Dumfries had much to report on, given the importance of developments in America with regard to slavery. The area was

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[37] The Dumfries Standard, 22.5.61.
[38] The Dumfries Herald, 20.9.61.
[39] The Dumfries Herald, 20.9.61.

reluctant to offer support to moves towards mediation at this stage, although later developments in the War would later change this stance. We saw in the previous chapter the ways in which the Cotton Famine affected Dumfriesshire, and this chapter will demonstrate that economic conditions did not influence attitudes towards the War, and did not persuade commentators to support mediation.

In the first three months of 1862 slavery was the main issue of debate, encouraged by the growing Republican support for emancipation in the Northern States. In March, Lincoln attempted to get a resolution through Congress whereby States would be offered compensation if they agreed to abolish slavery. The act was passed on April 10th, although the Dumfries Herald was unimpressed by the move, arguing that it was "a politic and strategic device."[40] The Dumfries Standard supported the declaration, going as far as to suggest that all the previous military successes of the North "are of less importance to their cause than the triumph to which we refer - the crushing blow struck against Confederatism and slavery by the late Message to Congress."[41] Earlier, in January 1862, the paper had expressed its belief that the Civil War would herald the end of slavery,[42] and it now felt that its opinion had been vindicated by Lincoln's announcement. The Standard went some way to changing its opinion as a result of the recent emancipation acts. It stated that if the North would embrace the abolitionist cause absolutely, "there are few people in this country who would not be glad to see the Confederacy entirely crushed."[43] This was a considerable change of mind by the Standard which, by its own admission, had hoped that the North would allow the South to secede in peace. It still felt that forced reunion was impossible, but nevertheless had significantly strengthened its support for the Northern States. The Herald signalled that the South had been correct

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[40] The Dumfries Herald, 21.3.62.
[41] The Dumfries Standard, 26.3.62.
[42] The Dumfries Standard, 15.1.62.
[43] The Dumfries Standard, 21.5.62.

all along, in declaring Lincoln's election to be the first stage in enforced abolition, and claimed that it was now time for the North to rid itself of slavery and allow the South to go free.[44] This clearly illustrates the way in which deep rooted attitudes served to formulate opinions. The Liberal Standard was quick to praise the North for its attempts to eradicate slavery, whilst the Tory Herald turned the situation around to illustrate just how right the South had been to secede from the Union.

In September 1862, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing all slaves in the rebelling states on January 1st 1863. The fact that the border states were exempted from the Proclamation led to instant criticism by some, especially the Herald which stated that "if it is a duty and a glory to rid any state of slavery, why is this great thing to be done only for the states in rebellion and not for the states in continued loyalty?"[45] The Herald clearly did not understand that Lincoln did not have the constitutional power to abolish slavery in the Northern Border states. The Dumfries Courier's response to the Proclamation was similar to that of the Herald. It felt that it had come too late to be genuinely based in principle rather than expediency and that this was proved "by the fact that the seceding states are to be allowed to retain their slaves if they return to the Union."[46] The Standard applauded the Proclamation but still believed it was too late for the Union to be restored. The paper argued that if the Proclamation had come earlier, the North could have subjugated the South, although it recognised the circumstances preventing Lincoln from doing this. The paper was clearly pleased with the result of the Proclamation, however, stating that "in the eye of the law, the once despised negro is reckoned the proud white man's equal and brother; and this circumstance will tend powerfully to dispel the abominable prejudice against colour which prevails in the

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[44] The Dumfries Herald, 30.5.62.
[45] The Dumfries Herald, 17.10.62.
[46] The Dumfries Courier, 7.10.62.

Northern States, and is the firmest rivet in the chain of slavery."[47] Opinion in Dumfriesshire towards the Emancipation Proclamation reflected that in Scotland and Britain as a whole.[48] The majority of Dumfriesshire commentators considered the Proclamation to be an act of desperation, with only the Standard coming close to recognising its humanitarian credentials. The Proclamation led to a small increase in support for the Northern cause, but the likelihood of it succeeding in its objective of subjugating the South was still very much doubted.

In 1862, Britain and France came close to offering mediation on the basis of separation, both regarding a Southern victory as inevitable.[49] The Dumfriesshire press also supported the inevitability of a Southern victory, as Lincoln's martial law and suspension of Habeas Corpus seemed to suggest a lack of support for the Washington Government by the people of the North. Suggestions of mediation by either France or Britain were discussed in Dumfries, but the overwhelming attitude was that mediation should be avoided. In a speech to the Union Society's Show, held at the Dumfries Mechanics Institute on 7th October 1862, Mr Hope Johnstone, Tory M.P. for Dumfriesshire, stated that "any interference on our part would be most disastrous; we could offer no advice but what must give offence to one party or the other."[50] The Standard felt that mediation was futile until the North gave up its claim for the restoration of the Union.[51] The Herald, on the other hand, came closest to supporting mediation, suggesting that when the South called for help, Britain should be forthcoming: "our duty is still to wait, in respectful deference to the proud and sensitive people who are now suffering so bitterly, till they indicate some wish for our friendly advice or help."[52]

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47 The Dumfries Standard, 15.10.62.

48 Adams, Civil War, vol.2, pp. 101-4; Botsford, 'Civil War', vol.2, pp. 572-91.

49 Adams, Civil War, vol. 2, pp. 33-74; McPherson, Battle Cry, pp. 554-57.

50 The Dumfries Herald, 10.10.62; note: The Union Society comprised the District Agricultural Societies of Dumfries, Kirkcudbright, and Wigtown.

51 The Dumfries Standard, 19.11.62.

52 The Dumfries Herald, 10.10.62.

The subject of mediation was a major issue which attracted attention in Britain in 1862. The British Government was confident that a Confederate victory was imminent, especially after the Second Battle of Bull Run, and was therefore eager to mediate in a possible resolution. The Cotton Famine intensified in 1862, and fears about possible social disruption naturally arose, so a quick end to the American War was very much desired. The feeling in Dumfriesshire, however, was against mediation at this stage, preferring to leave the two belligerents to sort the situation out themselves. This is a possible indication of the lack of economic distress which the region was experiencing as a result of the Civil War, which meant that there was no economic incentive to support mediation. It is highly unlikely, however, that commentators were unaware of the effect which the Cotton Famine would have upon the agriculture of Dumfriesshire, especially given the reliance of the county upon demand from Lancashire. The Northern victory at Antietam on September 17th, however, meant that any realistic hopes of mediation were dashed. The victory led, in part, to the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation on September 22nd. The Proclamation did not greatly affect either British or Dumfriesshire feelings towards the War, serving only to reinforce the opinions of both sides, with Southern sympathisers seeing it as a sign of desperation, and Northern supporters bemoaning its lateness. It did, however, make mediation on behalf of the South impossible, as foreign powers were then unlikely to ally themselves with a slave power. The following year would see growing sympathy for Southern recognition in Dumfriesshire, but in 1862, the conclusion was that it was preferable for Britain to merely observe the conflict in America.

1863 : The Climax of Opinion

In 1863, distress continued as a result of the Cotton Famine in Britain, and the year also saw the implementation of the Emancipation Proclamation, defeat for the South at Vicksburg and Gettysburg, and a move by the Confederates to enrol blacks into their army.

In Dumfriesshire, the local press recognised the growing strength of the North, but felt that the South was not yet subjugated. The issue of Southern recognition was very much in the news, with varying opinions as to the desirability of British recognition of the Confederacy. Botsford described how 1863 witnessed the climax of Scottish opinion on the Civil War,[53] and this was replicated in Dumfriesshire, as the Dano-German conflict gained prominence in 1864 and took over from the Civil War as a focus for interest. We have also seen that, at the beginning of 1863, Dumfriesshire's important pork trade was suffering as a result of the Civil War, as was the rest of the agricultural trade. Some improvement was being witnessed in the county's woollen industry, but we will see that these economic effects of the War did not have much influence upon Civil War opinions.

The Dumfries Herald began the year by again blaming the American political system for the War. The paper argued that reunion was unlikely because of the flaws of federalism, which led to problems which were insurmountable.[54] The paper also suggested that the 'elective principle' for "appointing the sovereign ruler of the American Union, was the main cause of the perpetual bickerings betwixt North and South."[55] The Herald also criticised the elective principle for the ruin of Poland and for preventing Greece from obtaining stable government. The paper felt that the whole American problem was a question of size: "they will be all the greater when their territory is less . . . compact unity alone is national strength."[56] Slavery continued to be a major factor in determining Liberal responses to the Civil War. In March, William Ewart spoke to his constituents at a meeting in Sanquhar. His predictions for the American War were gloomy, believing it would be protracted and bloody, with no foreseeable end. He criticised the North for carrying on "a useless unproductive warfare," but was more critical of the stance

53 Botsford, 'Civil War', vol. 2, p. 799.
54 The Dumfries Herald, 30.1.63.
55 The Dumfries Herald, 20.3.63.
56 The Dumfries Herald, 22.5.63.

taken by the South on the issue of slavery. They gave it too much importance in the scheme of things, he argued, giving "it a position which was never dreamed of by Washington and his colleagues at the formation of the Republic."[57] In the Standard, a correspondent entitled 'Uncle Tom' wrote in defence of the slave, questioning the tendency of the press to call for the North to let the South go in peace. The writer described how anti-Northern feeling was often generated by a dislike of Northern people, but argued that "when the liberty of countless thousands is at stake, we should forget the follies and arrogance of a people . . . sweep away all prejudice, and calmly consider the great issue involved in this war."[58] The writer also questioned the very prevalent assumption that the North could not win, and equated the struggle of the slave with the ancient Scottish struggle for freedom. This was an interesting angle for the writer to take, because previously the Scottish struggle had been used to increase support for the South,[59] but in this case 'Uncle Tom' asked whether:

> we,as true and leal-hearted Scotchmen, [can] refuse the right hand of genuine and sympathetic fellowship to a people struggling not only for the perpetuation of civil liberty amongst themselves, but for the freedom of an oppressed race whose chains have so long been a disgrace to progress and civilisation? - Can we forget the struggles of our own forefathers in the cause of civil and religious liberty? - Can we forget our own ancestral glory, a glory which should be the proud boast of every son of Caledonia? - Can we forget the memory of those whose blood was shed in the silent glen and on the lonely mountain-side, that succeeding ages might enjoy the fullest liberty?[60]

The Scottish analogy was also raised on the 13th of August, in a lecture delivered on 'The American Struggle - Its Nature and Objects' at Annan Mechanics' Institution. The speaker was the Reverend David Irving of New Jersey, a missionary in America, and formerly of Annan. In his lecture, Reverend Irving drew parallels between the American

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[57] The Dumfries Standard, 1.4.63.

[58] The Dumfries Standard, 8.4.63.

[59] See, for example, Finnie, 'Reconstruction', vol.1, pp. 188-204.

[60] The Dumfries Standard, 8.4.63.

conflict and those between Scotland and England in order to show the merits of the Northern cause. He referred to the Union of 1707 and asked "there were two rebellions in Scotland after that, but did the Government acknowledge the right of the people thus to act? Did any one dream that they were acting under the reserved right as a sovereign kingdom?"[61] It is important to point out that these Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745 did not threaten to break-up the United Kingdom, however. Reverend Irving then argued that to view states' rights as above the rights of nations was a modern tendency, claiming "state loyalty to abrogate the oath of national loyalty? Just as if a native of Annan or Dumfries were to regard the name as better and higher than that of a Scotchman."[62] This represents one of the few defences of the concept of national 'Union' in relation to Scotland within the British context. It is striking to note the absence of any great concern for such a concept at this time amongst commentators and the Scottish press.

The summer of 1863 saw the battles of Vicksburg and Gettysburg, the New York riots, and the question of Southern recognition again raising its head in Britain. The Herald now supported recognition, on the grounds that "it is surely the reverse of right to stand by and see them cut each others' throat, when, possibly, a movement of our finger might put a stop to this odious and fiendish strife."[63] It is highly likely that the Southern defeats at Vicksburg and Gettysburg provoked this response. The Standard, on the other hand, refused to accept the desirability of any moves towards recognition. "Our recognition of the Confederacy would not terminate the war, would not accelerate its close," argued the Standard, "it would tend, in fact, to render it more intensified and protracted."[64] Slavery was the issue preventing any compromise on the part of the Standard. The Dumfries Courier, silent on the subject of the War for many months,

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61 The Dumfries Courier, 18.8.63.
62 The Dumfries Courier, 18.8.63.
63 The Dumfries Herald, 28.8.63.
64 The Dumfries Standard, 8.7.63.

compared the War to the situation between Ireland and Britain. It commented upon an article in the Times which had claimed that, as Britain was the larger island, it had the right to exercise its will over Ireland. The Courier argued that "to a certain extent this is true as to the relation betwixt North and South."[65] The paper felt, however, that the Southern States might have the advantage over Ireland since "the Irish lack that stubbornness which marks the saxons of the Confederate States."[66] It is interesting to note that the issue of Union was raised here, in the Irish context. As we mentioned in the previous paragraph, the same concern was not raised with regard to Scotland's position in the Union.

The Herald remained resolute in its support for British recognition of the Confederacy during the autumn of 1863. The paper was certain that the War would end sooner if either France or Britain recognised the South. The paper asked "how Christian States can stand by so long, and under the sneaking plea of 'Non-intervention,' coolly contemplate men cutting each others' throats, when little more than a word would end the hostile internecine strife, is something the comprehension of which, we honestly admit, surpasses our philosophy and religion."[67] At this time the Herald was fervently against the North and argued that there were "comparatively few people in this Country who sympathise with the Federals."[68] It also described the type of people in Britain who supported the North. The first group were those with family in the North, and the second group were those who owned property in the Northern States. The paper sympathised with these people but doubted that a Northern victory would make that much difference anyway. It was the third group with which the Herald had no sympathy. These people were "our disappointed home-politicians - men who were wont to hold utopian

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65 The Dumfries Courier, 11.8.63.
66 The Dumfries Courier, 11.8.63.
67 The Dumfries Herald, 11.9.63.
68 The Dumfries Herald, 16.10.63.

republicanism in the highest honour, and are now chagrined when they see the idol of their worship shivered to atoms."[69] The Herald dismissed their arguments of a North fighting for the freedom of the slave, given the hatred displayed towards blacks in the North.

The most significant event of 1863 with regard to Dumfriesshire's attitude towards the Civil War, was the Dumfries Herald's new support for British recognition of the Confederacy. The summer of 1863 was a particularly important time which led to the zenith of British support for recognition.[70] Most influential was the continuing Cotton Famine, the acknowledgement that the War was going to be protracted, and that the North had gained important victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg. Gladstone's famous Newcastle speech in October 1862, in which he declared that the Confederates "have made an army; they are making, it appears, a navy; and they have made what is more than either; they have made a nation", was also an important factor in the discussion about recognition during 1863.[71] Given that the Herald advocated Southern recognition at the same time as it denounced democracy and republicanism, it is clear that the paper's stand was connected to its opinions on democratic reform. Economic distress was not significant enough at this stage in Dumfriesshire, nor did the Dumfries Herald mention it, to indicate it as a motive for the paper's support for Southern recognition. This serves to make the influence of the democracy debate all the more important.

1864 : The Presidential Election and its Repercussions

The penultimate year of the American Civil War saw the tide finally beginning to turn against the Southern States, and the re-election of Abraham Lincoln, the first time an American President had been re-elected since Andrew Jackson in 1832. The issue of slavery,

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69 The Dumfries Herald, 16.10.63.

70 Ellison, Support for Secession, pp. 111-33.

71 Crook, The North, the South, pp. 227-9. Quoted in McPherson, Battle Cry, p.552.

the probability of reunion, the state of democracy in the United States and in Great Britain were all discussed at this time. Opponents of political reform argued that democracy had failed in America, and that reformers should learn from the American experience and stop their demands for further enfranchisement at home. The first quarter of 1864 saw interest waning in the American War, as the Dano-German war was exciting more concern. In addition, news from America was not creating much interest so debate tended to concentrate on democratic issues, both in America and in Britain.

The most striking tendency during 1864 was the way in which the press were initially unwilling to accept the failing fortunes of the Confederacy, and instead bolstered the South and downplayed the North's achievements. Nationally, this tendency was led by the pro-Confederate London Times which published inaccurate reports about the War from June 1864, in order to bolster the South's flagging image.[72] The Herald also predicted the end of the North and the democratic experiment. It spoke of "the suicidal end in store for the once boasted and bepraised Democracy of America",[73] and it described how the War was proving British Radicals wrong about the merits of democracy. The Radicals, it claimed:

> had for years been engaged in exposing the corruptions of monarchical and aristocratic government. They have been crying up household suffrage and the ballot. Generally, they have committed themselves to the belief that it is a Parliament which makes a people, and that a paper constitution is the only thing necessary to make a Free State. Events in America have dissipated all that nonsense.[74]

An interesting line was taken by the Dumfries Standard during the summer of 1864, when the paper described how the South was regaining its strength, as a result of some successes and because the North was tired of the War. In addition, the paper argued that the

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[72] Adams, Civil War, vol.2, pp. 226-7.
[73] The Dumfries Herald, 18.3.64.
[74] The Dumfries Herald, 29.6.64.

North was suffering from a number of major disadvantages: the cost of the War, the fact that many of the Southern slaves were not siding with the North, splits within the Northern population, and ultimately the realisation that it could only hold the South by the sword.[75] Whether or not the Standard was taking the same approach as the London Times in deliberately misrepresenting the situation in America is debatable. It is more likely, however, that the Standard was accepting the Times' accounts on face value, as the Standard did not share the domestic politics of the Times and was not a strong supporter of a Confederate victory. By October, however, the realisation that the North's position was becoming unassailable was emerging, with the Standard suggesting that "the chances of Union success are, it must be admitted, greater at present than they have perhaps ever been since the war commenced."[76] At a meeting in Dumfries, on 11th October, William Ewart agreed that the War seemed to be near an end, but would only go as far as prophesying that it would end in the emancipation of the slaves.[77]

The Presidential Election of 1864 was an extremely important moment in the American Civil War. It provided a judgement upon President Lincoln's war policy and the attitude of the Northern people towards the continuation of the War, when faced with Democratic candidate, and former commander of the Army of the Potomac, George McClellan's calls for an armistice. The election provoked a mixed response in Dumfries, with only the Standard approving of Lincoln's re-election, which the paper believed was the result of the Emancipation Proclamation, and the North voting for him because he took a stand against slavery.[78] The Courier was sceptical about the importance of the election, because Lincoln's authority could now only rest in the North.[79] The Tory Herald was predictably critical of the election, which it described as the first sign that America

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75 The Dumfries Standard, 24.8.64.
76 The Dumfries Standard, 5.10.64.
77 The Dumfries Standard, 12.10.64.
78 The Dumfries Standard, 23.11.64.
79 The Dumfries Courier, 22.11.64.

was entering "that transition stage, well known to the students of history, through which Republics pass on their way from democracy to tyranny."[80] The Herald argued that Lincoln's abuse of the United States Constitution was his greatest failing:

> the re-election of President Lincoln, therefore, is another step towards the complete illustration of the failure of Democratic institutions ... selfish, gross-minded men, like Lincoln, will always be developed - ready to sacrifice every consideration to personal power and place, and the too transcendental Constitution collapses like an empty wind-bag.[81]

The final comments on the American War in 1864 were about the effect of the conflict on democratic reform in Britain. The Herald described how the working classes of Great Britain had previously been made into Republicans because of "social distress, inflammatory speeches, half-learning, and bad logic," but that the American Civil War had caused Britons to abandon the idea of democracy.[82] Interest in the American Civil War was waning in 1864, as events elsewhere in the world eclipsed it in interest. The presidential election aroused most interest, leading to greater debate upon British political reform. We have seen, too, how local opinion was not yet ready to envisage a Northern victory, as the resilience of the South was defended at a time when the South's position was being attacked by Grant's campaign in the east, and Sherman's march through the Southern States. The final year of the war would show Dumfriesshire commentators that the North's position was unassailable.

1865 : The Final Stages

From the beginning of 1865, the Dumfries press recognised that the North was heading for victory in the Civil War. Lincoln's re-election had given the North

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80 The Dumfries Herald, 25.11.64.
81 The Dumfries Herald, 25.11.64.
82 The Dumfries Herald, 30.12.64.

confidence, and the South was acknowledged to be much weaker.[83] Following the Northern victory, most concern arose over the ability of the North to rebuild the Union, and guarantee that the South would not threaten secession again. The Herald had sided with the South's claims for independence throughout the war, and after nearly four years of arguing that a Northern victory was unlikely, it now claimed that it had always anticipated such an outcome. The paper was uncertain about the North's ability to rebuild the Union, however, feeling that the South would not resist Northern rule but that the permanent maintenance of Republicanism throughout the United States would prove difficult, without an occupying federal force in the South.[84] The Courier took very much the same line. It welcomed peace but voiced "regret at the overthrow of a cause so long and so gallantly defended."[85] It also questioned the likelihood of Southern submission to Federal authority, something which it felt would take a long time to achieve. The Standard voiced similar doubts itself, commenting that the gains which the North had won were doubtful, given the expense of the war. The Standard's advice to the North was that it should not be too hard on the South and should "pave the way for its return to the Union by easy conditions and gracious words."[86]

The assassination of President Lincoln on 14th April 1865 gave commentators the opportunity to move away from the issues which the War had thrown up, and instead concentrate on the details of the assassination. The assassination served to martyr Abraham Lincoln, so we do not learn what the full estimation of Lincoln's role as wartime President really was amongst local commentators. The assassination firstly led the newspapers to question the existence of Southern involvement in the murder plot, but the papers generally agreed that there was no benefit for the South to gain from such an

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83 The Dumfries Herald, 20.1.65; the Dumfries Standard, 22.2.65, 4.3.65.
84 The Dumfries Herald, 21.5.65.
85 The Dumfries Courier, 25.4.65.
86 The Dumfries Standard, 19.4.65.

involvement, given Lincoln's policy of reconciliation.[87] The assassination itself was greeted with horror and revulsion, and led to flattering depictions of the President which had been absent, if not completely contradicted, during the War.[88] One reason for the admiration of Lincoln, however, was his lack of vengeance towards the South and his willingness to heal the wounds of the nation rather than prolong and worsen them. It was this estimation of Lincoln's character which led commentators to worry about the credentials of the new President, Andrew Johnson. A warm tribute was also expressed by Dumfries Town Council.[89] Such tributes were echoed in the national press.[90]

The final year of the Civil War saw local commentators accepting that Southern hopes for a victory were futile, and that the North would prove victorious. But what sort of victory had the North won? Surely the South would not return to the Union and assimilate itself back into the Republic? Few amongst the Dumfriesshire press believed that reconstruction would be an easy task, believing that at best a federal force would be necessary to maintain order and obedience to the re-formed Government at Washington. The Herald, which had long supported the Southern cause, still called for separation, this time along constitutional lines, as it did not believe that permanent reconciliation could ever result. Lincoln's assassination led the local press to evaluate the President's character, and all can be said to have agreed with the conclusion that Lincoln died a better President than he had been at the beginning of his first term of office. Fears for the future remained, especially under a new American president, but it was hoped that reconciliation would be smooth, and achieved without animosity and punishment.

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87 The Dumfries Herald, 28.5.65; the Dumfries Standard, 3.5.65.

88 The Dumfries Standard, 3.5.65; the Dumfries Herald, 28.5.65; the Dumfries Courier, 2.5.65.

89 Dumfries Town Council Monthly Meeting, 5th May 1865. Council Book, 7 Nov 1856 - 4 Aug 1865, vol. 29, pp. 529-30.

90 Adams, Civil War, vol.2, pp. 259-61.

This examination of Dumfriesshire attitudes towards the American Civil War has shown the importance of a number of factors in influencing local opinion. Of most significance was the role played by politics, and in particular the attitude of commentators towards democratic reform. It has been shown that newspapers, such as the Dumfries Herald, were vociferous in their criticism of American political institutions, a passion which was directly related to their opposition to democratic reform at home. The economic effect of the American Civil War in damaging the agricultural industry of Dumfriesshire and in boosting the small woollen industry of the region had a lesser effect in the formulation of opinions. It is clear, therefore, that political attitudes were of more importance than economic factors in this respect. In their analysis of the American Civil War, the local newspapers remained faithful to their party-political leanings. The Herald, a Tory paper, supported secession and sided with the South during the war, as a result of its sympathy for the South's struggle for independence, but particularly its dislike of Northern democracy. This attitude was in line with the opinions held by British Conservatives.[91] The other two newspapers, the Courier and the Standard, occupied the political middle ground, and tended to be less rigid in their attitudes towards the American Civil War. Both tended to concentrate upon slavery: the Courier expressed sympathy for neither side because neither would support abolition, and even after the Emancipation Proclamation the Courier still felt that the North was not against slavery in principle. The Standard's attitude was similar; it professed that it would support whichever side abolished slavery, and agreed with secession if it resulted in abolition.

The results are similar when we consider the attitude of the papers towards democracy. Adams discussed how British opinions on the Civil War tended to originate from individual views about democracy,[92] and in Scotland, Botsford described how the

91 Adams, Civil War, vol.2, pp. 286-9, 300.
92 Adams, Civil War, vol.2, pp. 274-305.

events of the American Civil War were used by both Radicals and Tories to justify their stances on democratic issues.[93] Dumfriesshire commentators exhibited a similar tendency: the Herald was very critical of the American system of democracy and any attempts at British enfranchisement of the working classes. Its support for the South, therefore, tied in with its dislike of democracy. The Courier and the Standard took a similar stance, both expressing disappointment rather than criticism at the North's acceptance of restrictions on personal freedom. The Standard had called for the enfranchisement of the British working classes, in anticipation of the problems which would be faced during a cotton shortage, and this demonstrated the paper's support for democratic reform. Therefore, these two papers illustrated the complex issues which faced Liberal observers of the American Civil War. On the one hand they strongly opposed slavery and were hostile to the South, but they also expressed concern about the North's restrictions upon personal freedom. Neither the Courier nor the Standard strongly supported the South's right to independence, so in this respect they differed from a large section of British Liberals; slavery tended to counteract any such sentiments for these two papers.

Economic interest did not appear to affect local newspaper opinion on the American Civil War, and there was little varying of opinion as a result of the economic effects of the war. The Standard had described the benefits which would result from secession to British North America,[94] but turned its back on immediate self-interest when it spoke of its opposition to trade with the Southern States. It suggested that Britain should look elsewhere for raw cotton supplies,[95] and specifically argued against Southern sympathy arising as a result of the Cotton Famine. This illustrates how the Cotton Famine, which had a significant, if not direct, effect on Dumfriesshire, did not lead to local support for the Confederacy, and shows that opinions were not directly interest-led.

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93 Botsford, 'Civil War', vol. 2, p. 594.
94 The Dumfries Standard, 23.1.61.
95 The Dumfries Standard, 16.7.62.

In addition, at a meeting held to discuss Dumfriesshire's reaction to the Cotton Famine, Sir William Jardine argued that it was slavery that was at the heart of the troubles, a view which does not lean towards sympathy for the South.[96] A possible explanation as to why there appeared to be little self-interest operating was the dual effect which the war was having on the Dumfriesshire economy. The woollen industry in Dumfriesshire was benefiting from the war, at the same time as agriculture in the region was suffering because of the Cotton Famine in Lancashire.

It is also useful at this stage to examine the extent to which attitudes towards America in Dumfriesshire were consistent in the antebellum period and during the Civil War, to illustrate how deeply-rooted opinions may have been. The local reaction to American democracy was a consistent theme throughout the period, and will prove to be one of the most decisive factors in determining opinion during the American Civil War. In the antebellum period, American democracy was criticised for failing to produce impressive leaders, and during the Civil War, the same criticism also occurred with Abraham Lincoln being described as both ineffective and inadequate.[97] The powers of the American President were also criticised before the war for being too great, a view that persisted and strengthened, especially when President Lincoln suspended the doctrine of Habeas Corpus, and adopted other allegedly 'despotic' policies.[98] The debate about the extent to which individual American states should have rights did not interest the Dumfriesshire press, and this lack of concern persisted during the War, when slavery was upheld as the main issue of the conflict. The pre-war debate centred around the pro-slavery and abolitionist arguments, rather than whether the issue should be in the hands of the state or federal legislature. Rather than calling for the rights of states to be

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[96] The Dumfries Herald, 5.12.62; Sir William Jardine (1801-1874) was the 6th Baronet of Applegirth and son of Sir Alexander Jardine.

[97] The Dumfries Standard, 15.10.62; the Dumfries Courier, 4.11.62.

[98] The Dumfries Courier, 3.9.61, 14.10.62.

respected, the local newspapers tended to support a stronger central government, but we have seen that this support for a strong centre did not translate into support for the North during the Civil War. In the pre-war period, anti-Southern feeling was much more prevalent than during the War, with the Dumfries Times being the most critical in the early days, whilst the Dumfries Standard was also very anti-South in its sentiments. The Standard's criticism of the South was symptomatic of its anti-slavery sentiments, although during the War it stressed that it would support whichever side agreed to abolish slavery. Slavery was the strong issue of the period. All the papers were predictably anti-slavery, but did not tend to link slavery with the Southern aristocracy, instead attributing it to the hypocrisy of the 'freedom-loving' republic. The North was criticised for its weakness over the slavery issue, and this criticism was continued throughout the war, especially by the Standard and the Courier. These papers maintained that they would support the North if the North were to come out in favour of abolition. Even when Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, the papers refused to believe that the North was truly in favour of abolition.

It is the contention here that it was the issue of democracy which moulded opinions during the Civil War. The evidence for this is two-fold: firstly, the newspaper most critical of the North was the Herald which was also the most vociferous in its criticism of American democracy. The Standard also criticised democracy in America, because it felt that the size of the country did not facilitate it. These papers were very critical of the South in the pre-war period, so something must have held them back from supporting the North during the War. Rather than attributing the lack of Northern support to this criticism of democracy, one could suggest that the North's refusal to take an abolitionist stand was the problem. Slavery was regarded as a stain upon the American system, and its abolition was vigorously called for, but when the North did not take a stand on the slavery issue from the outset of the War, it lost much potential support from

papers such as the Standard. This argument can be dismissed, however, when we see that the North was also criticised for being too weak *before the war* in its refusal to support the abolitionist cause, but *this* did not stop the press from remaining in favour of the North. This leads us to the second point. We have seen that William Ewart, the MP for Dumfries, was very cautious in any praise he afforded to the United States. This could be seen as unusual coming from a radical politician who had been sympathetic to the Dumfries Chartists. He clearly felt unable to praise America too much given the climate of opinion against American democracy. The newspapers were amongst those who did not wish to see American style democracy in Great Britain, and were unwilling to support the North, because this would have allied them to the likes of Bright and Cobden, who wanted to see American-style institutions in Great Britain. The local newspapers and local politicians were therefore reluctant to support the North during the Civil War because of their reluctance to see American-style political institutions in Britain.

Chapter 8: The Effect of the Cotton Famine on the Textile Industries of Paisley

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It is well documented that Lancashire was crippled by the Cotton Famine during the American Civil War, but it is less well known that the Scottish cotton industry was also badly hit.[1] The main centre of the Scottish industry was in the west, with manufacturing based mainly in Glasgow and the surrounding districts of Renfrewshire, Lanarkshire, and Ayrshire. The town of Paisley, in particular, offers an interesting insight into the problems caused by the Cotton Famine. It will be shown that contemporaries argued over the extent of the distress in Paisley, with some claiming that the town escaped relatively unscathed from the Famine, while others described the devastation and poverty arising from the shortage of cotton. It is true that Paisley did not suffer to the same extent as some other Scottish towns, such as Kirkintilloch,[2] but this was because the town had moved away from complete dependence on the cotton industry, and by 1861, industries such as engineering, mining, and soap-making were thriving.[3] The Cotton Famine resulted in many people being thrown out of employment in Paisley and many more working part-time. The cotton manufactories of Paisley tended to operate on a large scale, with most factories employing over 300 operatives, a size advantage which enabled many firms to survive the Cotton Famine more easily than their smaller competitors.[4] The plight of the handloom weavers also affected the Paisley economy, and their suffering combined with that of the cotton-factory workers to produce a strong protest movement in the town. The chief causes of the handloom weavers' difficulties were the 1860 Cobden Treaty, which admitted all French manufactured goods into Britain duty free, and the spread of power-loom weaving. Together, the handloom weavers and the cotton operatives combined to exert pressure on the authorities over issues such as poor

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1 Ellison, Support for Secession; Watts, J. The Facts of the Cotton Famine, 2nd ed., London, 1968; Augar, 'The Cotton Famine'; Robertson, 'Scottish Cotton Industry', p. 119.

2 Henderson, Cotton Famine, pp.119-131, p. 127.

3 Macdonald, 'The Radical Thread', pp. 38-9; Clark, Paisley, p. 132.

4 Augar, 'Cotton Famine', pp. 73-4.

law reform and emigration subsidies, two subjects which will be developed in this chapter. They also fought against what they saw as the prejudice shown to them by the Glasgow authorities, a clear point of antagonism during this period.

This examination of Paisley's response to the Cotton Famine will highlight the distinct nature of the town's political and social culture. We will see how a good deal of protest arose due to the distress caused by unemployment and reduced working hours. This contrasts with the relative calm of Dumfriesshire during its agricultural downturn. This may have been partly due to the severity of the problems faced, but was also due to the particular nature of the town of Paisley. It is interesting to note that most of the hostility voiced in Paisley by the cotton operatives was not against their own employers and civic leaders, nor against the North or the South in America, but was against the authorities in Glasgow and London. Therefore Paisley offers a perspective which contrasts with that of the other two case-studies in this thesis: it was a town which clearly identified itself as a separate entity from the wider conurbation of Glasgow, and which united to exercise antagonism and protest in order to make itself heard in the wider community. After providing a brief summary of the effect of the American Civil War upon the Scottish cotton industry and the background to Paisley's cotton trade, this chapter will discuss the extent to which Paisley was affected by the Cotton Famine, through the use of local newspaper trade reports and other contemporary statistics. In addition, the trade of the thread firm J.&P. Coats will be examined, to illustrate the way in which a large company such as this survived the cotton shortage. The alleviation of the distress caused by the unemployment will then be examined, and will raise some interesting conclusions about the consequences of the cotton shortage in Paisley, including regional animosities over the allocation of relief, and the non-violent means by which the unemployed expressed their opposition to public policy. This chapter will then examine the importance of the Cotton Famine in the formulation of Civil War attitudes in Paisley.

Earlier studies of this topic have pointed to the Civil War and the Cotton Famine as being the main causes of the Scottish cotton industry's collapse. By the late 1960s, however, opinions changed, and the War came to be viewed as one of a succession of crises to hit the industry, one of which was strong competition from Lancashire.[5] Robertson argued that "the collapse of the Scottish cotton industry with the onset of the Cotton Famine in 1861 was a purely temporary affair, lasting only as long as the Famine itself."[6] He suggested that the Scottish cotton industry recovered quickly from the Famine, and that the main reasons for the ultimate decline of the industry, as we have already noted, were labour force inefficiencies, lack of adaptability to fashion changes, and a general lack of enterprise in the industry.[7] There is, however, general agreement that the Paisley cotton industry survived the collapse of the Scottish industry, mainly as a result of the town's specialisation upon thread manufacture. For example, Henderson described how, in the 1960s, "the manufacture of thread at Paisley is virtually the only surviving branch of an industry which played an important part in the early industrial history of modern Scotland."[8] Robertson attributed this success to the entrepreneurial skill of the Coats firm,[9] while Knox described how Coats benefited from economies of scale, as the firm specialised upon a smaller range of threads. He also explained how the Scottish thread industry, based in Paisley, managed to survive, while other branches of the cotton industry failed, mainly as a result of better labour relations, and market organisation.[10]

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5 See, for example, Marwick, W.H. Economic Developments in Victorian Scotland, London, 1936, p. 108, p. 224; Pryde, G.S. Scotland: From 1603 to the Present Day, Edinburgh, 1962, p.241; Henderson, Cotton Famine, p. 131; Ferguson, W. Scotland: 1689 to the Present. Edinburgh, 1968, p. 298.

6 Robertson, 'Scottish Cotton Industry', p. 120.

7 Robertson, 'Scottish Cotton Industry', p. 128.

8 Henderson, Cotton Famine, p. 131. See also Pryde, Scotland, p. 241; and Marwick, Victorian Scotland, p. 224.

9 Robertson, 'Scottish Cotton Industry', p. 128.

10 Knox, W.W. Hanging By A Thread: The Scottish Cotton Industry, c. 1850-1914. Preston, 1995, p.81, pp. 177-9.

The Paisley Textile Industry

The textile industry in Paisley had its roots in the eighteenth century, when work was produced in linen, and occasionally cotton. The introduction of the power-loom meant that hand-loom weaving began to make up a much smaller proportion of the town's industry. It also meant that Lancashire could now out-price India, and that region was therefore able to cultivate a strong Eastern trade. Paisley thread manufacturers consequently began to use the Lancashire yarn in the spinning of thread. The invention of the sewing machine by Elias Howe in America in 1846 revolutionised the sewing thread industry and the two main Paisley producers, Clark & Co. and J.&P. Coats, quickly took advantage of this opportunity. The Clark firm was the originator of the thread trade in Paisley in 1806, while the Coats firm was established in 1827. Both of these firms enjoyed a good trade with America, and in order to promote this trade, and escape high American tariffs, they eventually established subsidiary firms in the United States, the Clark firm in Newark, New Jersey, and the Coats firm in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. In 1862, out of twelve cotton firms in existence in Paisley, six of these were either Clark or Coats firms.[11]

The Effect of the Cotton Famine in Paisley

The Cotton Famine was one of two factors which contributed to the distress in the British cotton industry during the Civil War. The other factor, which initially led to shorter working hours and increasing unemployment in 1861 and early 1862, was pre-Famine over-production, which meant that demand was low in the early years of the War.[12] It was not until mid-1862 that the cotton shortage began to manifest itself, leading to severe distress until the autumn of 1863. After 1863 alternative supplies of raw cotton mitigated the effects of the American shortage, although fluctuating exchange rates and high American tariffs also served to depress some parts of the cotton industry.

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11 Blair, Paisley Thread, pp. 60-1.

12 Augar, 'Cotton Famine', p. 36.

The Cotton Famine began to noticeably affect Paisley during the summer of 1862, and the depression in the cotton trade was compounded by the growing unemployment of the weavers in the town.[13] A survey presented by Robert Kerr, the Paisley manufacturer, to Richard Cobden, showed that there were 746 unemployed weavers in Paisley in June, 1861.[14] The extent of the increasing problems in the cotton industry were illustrated when the largest employer in Paisley, J.&P. Coats, began operating on three-quarters time in August and September 1862.[15] In November, the Paisley Herald described the growing distress in Paisley, commenting that "the thread mill workers are getting less and less employment, and . . . on the whole the amount of wages paid to that numerous class is at a lower point at present than at any former period since they began to be affected by the cotton scarcity."[16] Disagreement arose in Paisley about the extent of distress in the town, a problem which led, as we will see, to great controversy over the alleviation of that distress. For example, a speaker at a meeting of the Established Presbytery of Paisley in December 1862, stated that "at present there existed in the town no special distress. It was in a better position than it used to be, owing to the greater variety of occupations which it contained."[17] This variety of employment partly explains why Paisley managed to escape much of the severe distress which other neighbouring towns suffered. The Saturday Post described how "the capital of the Paisley manufacturers and merchants, which used to be almost entirely locked up in the production of textile goods, has, during the last couple of decades, found additional outlets in engineering, soap-making, starch-making and a prodigious extension of the thread manufacture."[18] The Cotton Famine was clearly causing some destitution in Paisley during 1862, however,

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[13] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 12.7.62, 13.9.62.

[14] Kerr, R. 'Fair Trade Versus 'Free Trade' - Falsely so Called.' Paisley Pamphlets, P.C. 298, 39 (1860-62), p. 640.

[15] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 11.10.62.

[16] The Paisley Herald, 29.11.62.

[17] The Paisley Herald, 6.12.62.

[18] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 13.12.62.

which, together with the weavers' distress, led to concerns about the increasing poverty in the town. Paisley's problems were much less severe than those in Lancashire, though, so criticism inevitably arose about how serious the town's distress actually was. The existence of other industries further compounded this criticism, and whilst this clearly helped Paisley to withstand the more serious effects of the Cotton Famine being endured elsewhere in Britain, the town did suffer as a result of the shortage of cotton.

Initially, reliable statistics describing the distress in Paisley were unavailable, and qualitative descriptions of conditions by local commentators had to be relied upon. It was not until December 1862 that comprehensive data regarding the cotton industry was provided. The Glasgow Saturday Post collected and published figures relating to the cotton and thread manufacturers of Paisley, which described the previous levels of employment in each of the factories, the present level of employment in each firm, and the extent to which short-time was being worked. We can see the effect of the Cotton Famine upon the cotton-thread manufactures of Paisley from examination of the following table:

Firm	Fully Employed	Employed at Present	Time Employed
J.&P. Coats	1017	1017	Full
Clark & Co.	600	600	Full
Kerr & Clark	600	224	Two-thirds
Russell, Dalglish & Co.	400	195	Full
Jas. Carlisle, Sons & Co.	360	200	Full
J.&R. Clark & Co.	300	294	Two-thirds
R.&J.P. Kerr	300	300	Full
W. Clapperton & Co	No return	240	Three-quarters
J. Clark & Co.	No return	60	Three-quarters
P. Kerr & Co.	No return	51	Full
Jas. Clark & Co.	30	30	Full
D. Clark & Co.	50	25	Three-quarters
Ross & Duncan	60	20	Irregular
James Yuill & Co.	No return	200	Full
Twigg, Dalglish & Co.	150	-	Closed
J. Kerr & Sons	30	-	Closed
G. McKenzie	20	-	Closed

Table 8.1: Employment in Paisley Cotton Firms 1862 (The Glasgow Saturday Post, 13th December 1862)

These figures clearly show the problems facing local commentators. In one sense, the industry seemed to be coping well, with only three closures, and many firms working full-time. On the other hand, there was a good deal of short-time working, and only four firms managed to keep their full complement of hands working at this stage. Assuming that the full complement of hands at the four firms with 'no returns' was 515 workers, the previous figure suggested by the Saturday Post, it is calculated that out of 4468 cotton operatives, 2393 workers were fully employed (53.5%), 325 were on three-quarters time (7%), 718 were on two-thirds time (16%), 20 were working irregular hours (0.5%), whilst 1012 were unemployed (23%).[19] It is interesting to note that the Saturday Post argued that even when combined with the 250 idle hand-loom weavers, the unemployment in Paisley was "comparatively favourable."[20] Despite this comment, the paper then went on to describe the unemployment figures of Johnstone's cotton industry, which showed there to be 13 per cent unemployment in the industry of that town.[21] It is evident from the figures above, therefore, that whilst in the Paisley cotton industry unemployment considerably exceeded this figure, the fact that Paisley was home to a range of industries meant that general destitution in the town was not excessive. In addition, the figures clearly show that the larger firms, such as J. & P. Coats and Clark & Co., were coping most effectively with the crisis. This supports Augar's argument that in Lancashire, larger firms possessed an advantage when riding the storm of depression.[22]

Despite the availability of the above figures, the Paisley Herald continued to bemoan the lack of reliable statistics in December 1862, which made the task of ascertaining the full extent of distress in the town very difficult.[23] Information regarding distress was also available through the public meetings which were held by the

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19 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 13.12.62.
20 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 13.12.62.
21 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 13.12.62.
22 Augar, 'Cotton Famine', pp. 73-4.
23 The Paisley Herald, 27.12.62.

operatives, although we must be aware of the possibility of exaggerated estimates at such gatherings. Contrary to expectations, the depression did not recede in the spring of 1863, and indeed, the distress appeared to worsen. Illustrating, as well, that the unemployment also stretched beyond the weavers and the cotton spinners, a meeting of the town's dyers in March 1863 described the distress within their own industry:

> there are upwards of 200 of these operatives in Paisley, who do not obtain full employment, ... above 100 have not received more than one day's work per week for the last three months, and there are a few cases in which the men have wrought none at all during that time.[24]

In April, the Renfrewshire Independent provided the following Paisley unemployment statistics, which show clearly the widespread effect of the Cotton Famine on a range of textile occupations:

Female Cotton Spinners	60
Dyers	100
Plain Handloom Weavers	100
Block Printers	100
Fringers, tambourers, winders, sewers, etc.	240
Total	600

Table 8.2: Paisley Unemployment Statistics, April 1863 (Renfrewshire Independent, 18.4.63.)

In May 1863, the cotton trade of Paisley was in a poor and deteriorating condition. The Saturday Post described how Coats had thrown "a large number of men" out of work, which together with the growing number of idle weavers and dyers, meant that the prospects for the town were anything but bright.[25] At a meeting of the unemployed operatives in Paisley on 15th May 1863, the distress was discussed in further detail.

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[24] The Paisley Herald, 28.3.63.

[25] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 9.5.63.

Robert Cochran, secretary to the United Weavers, told the two hundred people present at the meeting, that "not including dyers and millworkers, the total number out of employment was 895."[26] From these figures, we can surmise that together with the 1012 cotton workers out of work, the total unemployment among textile workers in Paisley was approximately two thousand. This is reinforced by the Renfrewshire Independent, which stated that "there are, including ordinary and casual poor, 4 per cent, or 2000 men, women, and children in an impoverished and destitute condition."[27]

The Effect of the Cotton Famine on Coats the Thread makers

The Coats firm of thread makers is important to this examination of the Paisley cotton industry for two reasons. Firstly, the firm was the largest employer of cotton operatives in Paisley with 1017 employees in 1862, as we have seen. Secondly, the records of the firm are very much intact and offer a valuable insight into the effect of the American Civil War upon this important Paisley employer.[28] The most useful statistics regarding Coats' production during the American Civil War are those which concentrate upon thread sales, wages and profits on the thread account, and these are illustrated in Table 8.3. The figures for thread sales are especially important because as much as 80 per cent of thread sales were exported to the United States,[29] and they also illustrate the extent to which the cotton shortage affected production:

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[26] The Paisley Herald, 16.5.63.

[27] The Renfrewshire Independent, 23.5.63.

[28] Use will be made here of the article by A.K. Cairncross and J.B.K. Hunter, 'The Early Growth of Messrs J. & P. Coats, 1830-83', Business History 29 (April 1987), 157-77, which provides most of the relevant statistical information.

[29] Cairncross & Hunter, 'Coats, 1830-83', pp. 158-9.

Date	Sales of Thread (£'000s)	Wage Bill (£'000s)	Profits (£'000s)
1859	191.5	26.4	39.8
1860	224.6	26.9	40.2
1861	132.8	15.1	27.9
1862	232.3	20.9	63.9
1863	229.3	19.8	55.2
1864	140.8	13.0	8.0
1865	181.0	18.3	16.4
1866	394.3	31.0	57.6

Table 8.3: Thread Sales, Wage Bill and Profits of the Coats firm, 1859-1866 (abridged from Cairncross & Hunter, 161)

The table shows how sales of thread were high in 1860, but fell back in 1861. This is consistent with Augar's study of the Lancashire famine, in which he attributed low demand in 1861 to overproduction in 1860.[30] Sales increased in 1862 and 1863 but fell back sharply in 1864. The reliance of Coats on its American market can be attributed here, as a falling dollar and the 1864 tariff increase led to a decrease in sales.[31] The weakened dollar meant that British thread exports to America became a lot more expensive compared with American produced threads, a trend exacerbated by the new tariff, which added a duty of 47 per cent on to the price of British exports.[32] Once the Civil War had ended, sales of thread doubled.

The wage bill figures initially appear to be very useful, offering a perspective on the level of unemployment in Paisley. We must be cautious, however, in reaching hasty conclusions. When American cotton became scarce as a result of the Civil War, inferior Indian 'Surat' cotton was substituted. This yarn was spun at a lower speed and required an extra twist, thereby reducing output. If workers were paid according to their output, this would have led to wage cuts.[33] Therefore, we must be aware that a fall in the wage bill

[30] Augar, 'Cotton Famine', p. 36.
[31] Cairncross & Hunter, 'Coats, 1830-83', p. 159.
[32] Bagwell & Mingay Britain and America, p. 105.
[33] Knox, Hanging By A Thread, p. 95.

did not necessarily reflect a rise in unemployment. The wage bill corresponded with the movement of sales, falling in 1861 and again, but more severely than sales, in 1864. While the fall in the wage bill does not automatically imply a rise in unemployment then, it does indicate the impact that the Civil War was having on the industry, whether through layoffs or through wage reductions as a result of falling output.

The profit figures are interesting and illustrate that apart from a dip in 1861, Coats survived the War relatively unscathed at first. In 1864 though, profits plummeted from £55,200 to £8,000 as a result of the falling sales figures of this year. Most striking, however, is the peak in profits in 1862 which was not exceeded until 1868 when sales had almost doubled in value. This can be best explained by examining the figures for stock-holding during the Civil War period:

Date	Stocks of thread and yarn (£'000s)
1859	47.6
1860	49.0
1861	63.3
1862	118.6
1863	68.3
1864	63.2
1865	97.7
1866	135.3

Table 8.4: Stocks of Thread and Yarn at the Coats firm, 1859-1866 (abridged from Cairncross & Hunter, 171).

Here we can see how there was a large accumulation of stocks in 1862, a process begun in 1861 at the outbreak of the Civil War,[34] and which can explain Coats' resilience in the early years of the War. Cairncross and Hunter also assessed the constituents of costs during the nineteenth century, and found that the cost of yarn as a proportion of total costs

[34] Cairncross & Hunter, 'Coats, 1830-83', p. 173.

reached a peak of 70 per cent in 1864, indicating the high cost of cotton. Equally, it is shown that wages as a proportion of total costs, which remained stable at around 13 per cent until 1860, fell thereafter to between 8 and 10 per cent, as yarn costs increased as a proportion of costs.[35] Whether Coats offset the rising cost of yarn by reducing wages, or by making redundancies, is not clear. It is more likely, however, that wage cuts were favoured, as Cairncross and Hunter commented that even when the shortage of cotton was over, wages as a fraction of total costs remained at the low point of 8 to 10 per cent.[36] In Lancashire, redundancies had been favoured by the cotton operatives over wage cuts, amid fears that wage rates would not rise again after the cotton shortage.[37] It appears likely that this may have happened to the Coats employees, who accepted wage cuts that were not reversed after the War.

It has been shown that J. & P. Coats survived the effects of the American Civil War relatively well, due mainly to their ability to accumulate cotton stocks at the beginning of the War, and to run an overdraft in 1861 and 1862.[38] This probably stems from the size and strength of the Coats firm which made it much more able to adapt production and withstand outside pressures.

The Alleviation of Distress among the Cotton Operatives

a) The Scottish Poor Law

The unemployment in Paisley during the 1860s caused significant destitution in the town, and led to pressure upon the public authorities to provide relief. The Scottish Poor Law, however, unlike its English counterpart, did not permit the granting of relief to the able-bodied poor until they had been deprived of food for so long that they were no longer

35 Cairncross & Hunter, 'Coats, 1830-83', p. 175.
36 Cairncross & Hunter, 'Coats, 1830-83', p. 175.
37 Augar, 'Cotton Famine', p. 107.
38 Cairncross & Hunter, 'Coats, 1830-83', p. 175.

able-bodied.[39] This was understandably opposed in Paisley, where vociferous criticism was levied at the poor law authorities. The differences between the Scottish and English relief systems were first criticised at a meeting of Paisley Town Council on 2nd December 1862, when Mr Cowan commented that "it was a very strange distinction which prevented the able-bodied poor in Scotland from obtaining relief, and allowed it to this class both in England and Ireland."[40] The Paisley Herald also argued that the Scottish poor law should help the able-bodied, but in the meantime it called for an addition to the assessment in order to cover the crisis.[41] At the meeting of unemployed cotton operatives in Paisley on the 4th May 1863, Robert Cochran proposed a resolution which called for the reform of the Poor Law :

> That by the existing Scottish poor law there is no provision ensured for able-bodied men or women who, from whatever cause, and especially in cases of stagnation of trade, are thrown out of employment and cannot procure work, they and their wives and children being left to the risk of starvation; and, therefore, it is necessary that the law should be amended so that employment and adequate wages shall be found for every able-bodied person, male or female, in Scotland; or they shall have a right to demand and receive subsistence without being subject to the degradation of pauperism, and by so doing prevent all the suffering, immorality, disease, and crime which flow from the present state of things.[42]

Mr A.C. Wilson seconded the resolution, which was agreed to by the meeting.

While it was clear that no change to the law would come about immediately, the unemployed operatives decided to petition the Burgh and Abbey Parochial Boards to provide relief in exchange for labour. At a meeting of the operatives at the Trades' Hall on 15th May it was proposed:

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39 Cage, R.A. The Scottish Poor Law, 1745-1845, Edinburgh, 1981; Henderson, Cotton Famine, pp. 123-27.

40 The Paisley Herald, 6.12.62; probably Robert Cowan, a local butcher and Bailie: see Blair, Paisley Thread.

41 The Paisley Herald, 20.12.62.

42 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 9.5.63.

> That while the unemployed earnestly desire the Parochial Boards to give relief to those now suffering destitution from want of employment, they have no desire to become a burden upon the community, and they respectfully solicit the Parochial Boards of the Burgh and Abbey to provide labour for the unemployed to enable them to support themselves and families during the present time of distress.[43]

The Paisley Herald, in response to this meeting, declared the need for some system of relief, although it felt that the numbers requiring relief would be less than the numbers unemployed: "we will be surprised if more than a third of those said to be out of employment apply for, and be found fairly entitled to relief, and we have no doubt whatever but the Parochial Boards will have no great difficulty in dealing with that amount of destitution."[44] At a meeting of the Burgh Parochial Board, the minutes of the Relief Committee were read, in which the Committee had authorised the granting of temporary relief. It was stated that "the number of weavers who had applied and were relieved was 37, with 89 dependants. There were also 24 cotton-mill workers with 3 dependants relieved."[45] Although a meeting of the unemployed on 18th May 1863 heard that the Inspectors of the Burgh and Abbey Parishes of Paisley were treating applicants for relief inconsistently,[46] by June 1863, the number receiving relief from the Burgh Parochial Board was 68 weavers and 19 cotton spinners, plus 163 dependants, while the Abbey Board was relieving 49 weavers, 10 spinners, and 193 dependants.[47] The willingness of the Paisley Parochial Boards to consider the granting of relief at all to the able-bodied poor during the Cotton Famine is typical of the approach generally of the Poor Law at times of distress, and particularly by Paisley authorities at times such as this.[48]

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[43] The Paisley Herald, 16.5.63.
[44] The Paisley Herald, 16.5.63.
[45] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 23.5.63.
[46] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 23.5.63.
[47] The Renfrewshire Independent, 6.6.63.
[48] Cage, Poor Law, p. 60.

b) Calls for Emigration Assistance

For most of the nineteenth century, America had attracted Scottish emigrants who were in search of employment and higher wages. This was particularly the case in the industrial areas of Scotland during times of economic depression, with many Scots viewing America "first and foremost as a place where they could readily obtain lucrative employment as skilled tradesmen in a variety of embryonic American industries."[49] Jones commented that unemployed Scots gained a glimpse of the job opportunities which America offered through their correspondence with relatives who had already emigrated.[50] With the outbreak of the American Civil War, however, emigration there ceased, but unemployment and destitution at home continued. Canada was therefore looked to as a possible escape route for many of the unemployed operatives in Paisley, and a significant movement evolved in support of this measure. Initially, the handloom weavers were the main advocates of emigration, but once the Cotton Famine took hold, emigration was proposed as a partial solution to the unemployment of the cotton workers. The movement calling for emigration assistance from the Government was established in July 1862, at the same time as the Cotton Famine began to affect the cotton districts.[51] A strong movement in favour of emigration also existed in Lancashire,[52] and criticism soon arose in Paisley about the neglect which the Scottish cotton districts were being subjected to, compared with Lancashire. At a meeting of Paisley Emigration Society on 4th August 1862, the chairman, John Higgins, discussed the urgency of asking Lord Palmerston for aid in emigrating to Canada. He criticised the amount of aid being given to Lancashire, when there was also great poverty in Renfrewshire. Mr Charles McCartney moved the following resolution, calling for relief to be given for the purpose of emigration:

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49 Harper, Emigration, Vol.1: Willing Exiles, p. 253.
50 Jones, 'Scottish Emigration', p. 39.
51 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 5.7.62, 12.7.62.
52 Augar, 'Cotton Famine', pp. 165-201.

> That whatever measures may be devised, either by public or national subscription, or by legislative enactment, for the relief of the operative population of the kingdom, suffering at the present crisis, the condition of the Scottish operatives should be equally entitled to participate in the benefit thereof; and if they desire to emigrate the relief should be applied in the way and for the purpose of enabling them to emigrate.[53]

An article from the Toronto Globe of 5th August, reprinted in the Paisley Herald, called on the Canadian Government to offer free land grants to Paisley emigrants.[54] In the same issue, the Paisley Herald described how "the only proper measure to meet the crisis is emigration and colonisation, and that the Paisley weavers point to, and the Times supports them, and will the Ministers of the Crown say nay?"[55] It is possible that the emphasis which the unemployed of Paisley and their leaders placed upon emigration as a solution to the distress in the town, may have damaged their claims for relief from the Glasgow Relief Committee, which refused aid for emigration and tended to look unfavourably upon Paisley's general claims for relief. It is the assertion here that much of the drive for emigration may have been politically driven rather than based on purely economic grounds, a claim which will be discussed later.

c) Paisley Conflict with the Glasgow Cotton Operatives Relief Fund

The Glasgow Cotton Operatives Relief Fund was opened on 3rd September 1862, to provide aid to those workers suffering distress in the west of Scotland as a result of the Cotton Famine. The distribution of relief was controlled by four sub-committees under the co-ordination of a central sub-committee. The relief of Paisley came under the remit of the country districts sub-committee, but Henderson described how this relief was deemed as additional to the relief provided by the local areas themselves for their own distress.[56] He also described how there was much dissatisfaction with the provisions of the Glasgow

53 The Paisley Herald, 9.8.62.
54 The Paisley Herald, 23.8.62.
55 The Paisley Herald, 23.8.62.
56 Henderson, Cotton Famine, pp. 128-9.

Relief Fund,[57] and this thesis shows that Paisley was a major critic in this respect. Most controversial was the distribution of the money raised by the Scottish Cotton Operatives Relief Committee of Melbourne, in Australia, known as the 'Melbourne subscription.' The people of Paisley argued that this money was intended, in part, for the relief of distress in the town, a claim which the Glasgow Committee rejected. It will be asserted here that the conflict which arose between Paisley and the Glasgow Relief Fund was symptomatic of the uneasy relationship which existed between Paisley and Glasgow, and which was described by Macdonald as existing towards the end of the nineteenth century.[58]

In 1862, the unemployed Paisley operatives placed their claims upon the county of Renfrew Lancashire Relief Fund, and it was not until March 1863 that their attention turned to the Glasgow Relief Committee. A report of the sub-committee of the Glasgow Fund in March 1863 described how the Colonial Emigration Committee of Paisley had claimed part of the Melbourne subscription for assistance to emigrate. The sub-committee, however, stated that they "had no funds at their disposal specially appropriated to Paisley or emigration."[59] On the 18th March, the unemployed cotton operatives and handloom weavers of Paisley prepared two petitions at Smith's Coffee House, Moss Street, Paisley, to be put before the Glasgow Central Committee for Relief of Distress in West of Scotland. McGuire described how this practice of calling meetings to draw up petitions had been a common one in Paisley since the Chartist period.[60] The petition of the cotton operatives called for relief on the grounds that "the cotton workers have been unemployed for the period of seven months, and were on short time for a considerable period previously." After describing the conditions under which these operatives were living, the petition demanded that the operatives "have a legitimate claim for relief

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57 Henderson, Cotton Famine, p. 129.
58 Macdonald, 'The Vanduaria of Ptolemy', pp. 180-1.
59 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 21.3.63.
60 McGuire, 'Chartism in Paisley', p. 27.

from the fund under your charge - the object of which is not limited to Glasgow alone, but includes industrial distress throughout all the surrounding districts."[61] This petition illustrated the animosity which arose between Glasgow and the outlying districts at this time. The second petition, prepared by the handloom weavers, described how the weavers "were wholly unemployed the greater part of the year 1862, and since the beginning of the present year, 1863." Calling for aid in emigrating, the petition stated that "they conceive they have a fair claim for relief of distress in Glasgow and the West of Scotland."[62] On 23rd March, a meeting of Paisley Emigration Society reported that the Central Operative Relief Committee had refused aid to emigrate, but hinted at the possibility of Paisley receiving part of the Melbourne subscription.[63] By 18th April 1863, however, the Relief Committee stated that "in regard to Paisley, it appeared from the statements of the deputation that there was no great distress in that town, and the committee had therefore refused to make any grant to Paisley."[64] Response to this decision was swift, with the Emigration Society passing a resolution on 19th April:

> That a renewed application be made to the Executive Relief Committee of Glasgow for a share of the £2000 sent from Melbourne for behoof of the distressed operatives in the West of Scotland, and of which the subscribers in Melbourne intended Paisley should get a share, and to receive and take charge of which the Colonial Emigration and Relief Committee of of [sic] Paisley and neighbourhood was appointed, in which committee this society, in common with the subscribers in Melbourne and the rest of their townsmen in Paisley, have, as they ought to have, the most entire confidence; and resolve, further, that the Glasgow Committee be requested to send the money to Provost Campbell, as vice-chairman, leaving it to the Provost and other members to disribute [sic] it in relief of distress, or to apply it to emigration, or partly in the one way, and partly in the other, as they deem most advisable.[65]

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61 The Paisley Herald, 21.3.63.
62 The Paisley Herald, 21.3.63.
63 The Paisley Herald, 28.3.63.
64 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 18.4.63.
65 The Paisley Herald, 25.4.63.

At the aforementioned meeting of the Unemployed Cotton Operatives of Paisley on 4th May 1863, criticism was also aimed at the Executive Relief Committee of Glasgow over its refusal to grant Paisley part of the Melbourne subscription. Mr William Smith proposed the following motion with respect to the subscription:

> this meeting is satisfied that it was the intention of the subscribers that Paisley should receive a part thereof, and as there is an amount of distress in Paisley in need of immediate relief, application be made for part of the said Melbourne subscription; and that the Lord Provost of Glasgow be requested to transmit the same to the Provost of Paisley, as chairman of the Colonial Emigration and Relief Committee of Paisley, in whom this meeting have confidence that they will dispense the same in the best mode possible for the benefit of all those parties concerned.[66]

At the end of May, in a Report on the Outlying Districts, the Executive Committee of the Unemployed Cotton Operatives Relief Fund stated that:

> Having again considered the application from Paisley, the secretary reported the result of enquiries made since the last meeting, and as it appeared that the distress in Paisley was not such as to demand any local efforts for its relief, and the Parochial Boards of the Burgh and Abbey parishes resolved to give and were giving relief to the able-bodied poor in the town, the sub-committee did not feel constrained to entertain the application.[67]

It is clear that the Glasgow Relief Committee felt that Paisley was not in sufficient distress to warrant the granting of aid to the town. The principal reason for this stance was probably the fact that other branches of trade were not suffering in Paisley, which meant that the town as a whole was not unduly distressed. In addition, however, the Glasgow Committee suggested that there was insufficient relief being provided by Paisley itself for its unemployed operatives, especially from those trades which were escaping the depression. This represented a commonly held view in the nineteenth century, the belief that poverty should be alleviated by the local authorities first and

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66 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 9.5.63.

67 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 30.5.63.

foremost. It is also valid to suggest that the movement working on behalf of the unemployed was expressing a mixed message to the Glasgow Committee. Their overwhelming emphasis on assistance for emigration seemed to override their claims for relief due to destitution and starvation, and the Committee may have felt that the claim for emigration assistance was based upon political considerations rather than economic necessity.[68]

Evidence that the agitators for assistance to emigrate had political considerations at heart was illustrated when Robert Cochran, a well-known Radical in Paisley since the 1840s, spoke about the advantages of emigration at some length. He also went on to claim that "the working classes would never get fair play until there was an extension of the franchise."[69] This radical interest in emigration as a means of improving the political condition of the working classes was a constant one throughout the early part of the nineteenth century. In the years before the 1832 Reform Act, particular emphasis was put upon emigration by Liberals who felt that Britain offered little prospect to the working classes. Harper described the efforts which Liberal journals, such as the Edinburgh Review, made in espousing the political benefits to be gained from American emigration.[70] The Radical Riots of 1820 also intensified opposition to the British system of government, and made America seem all the more appealing, with a number of the insurgents actually fleeing to America from Paisley.[71] While the 1832 Reform Act went some way to satisfying democratic reformers, the failure of the Act to enfranchise the working classes led to the formation of the Chartist movement, which Jones described as being "full of enthusiasm for the United States and their generous propaganda may have helped many to decide where

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68 Jones, 'Scottish Emigration', pp. 30-31, pp. 54-8, discusses the radical support for emigration on political grounds; as does Augar, 'Cotton Famine', who describes the support given to emigration to the Colonies or the United States by the Lancashire operatives for political reasons, pp. 200-01.

69 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 4.7.63.

70 Harper, Emigration, p. 244.

71 Clark, Paisley, pp. 61-4.

they would emigrate."[72] While Jones argued that political motives for emigration were greatest before 1840, radicals such as Robert Cochran still clearly associated emigration with political reform considerations. It is possible that the failure of the Reform Bill in 1860 may have motivated this frustration at the lack of working class enfranchisement, in a similar way to the aftermath of the 1832 Reform Act.

This section provides evidence of a strong local identity in Paisley, which clashed with the wider view of how poor relief should be organised. We can see that not only did Paisley spokesmen disagree with the differences between the English and Scottish Poor Laws, but that it also disagreed with decisions made in Glasgow about the distribution of relief. The attitudes expressed in Paisley therefore exhibit, not a Scottish attitude, or even a Glasgow one, but a distinctive Paisley identity. These tensions between Paisley and Glasgow were explored in greater detail by Macdonald who discussed how Paisley struggled during the nineteenth century to avoid being regarded as a mere suburb of Glasgow, a struggle which she described as "a conflict between its self-image and an inferior identity ascribed from 'outside'."[73] This section has shown that this was strongly exhibited during the American Civil War period, with Paisley identifying itself quite separately from Glasgow and the rest of the West of Scotland.

d) The County of Renfrew Lancashire Distress Movement

Even though there was economic distress in Paisley as a result of the Cotton Famine, the call still went out for subscriptions to be raised towards alleviating the Lancashire distress. This benevolence was not unanimous, however, and criticism arose over the propriety of sending money to Lancashire when there was distress closer to home. In anticipation of a public meeting to be held on the subject of the Lancashire distress, "One of the Unemployed" summed up the common sentiment in a letter to the Paisley Herald:

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[72] Jones, 'Scottish Emigration', p. 55.

[73] Macdonald, 'The Vanduaria of Ptolemy', p. 181.

> we cannot refuse sympathy to our English brethren; but there is distress at home, and the first duty incumbent on the wealthy landowners and manufacturers in Renfrewshire is to provide for the unemployed operatives at their own doors, unless the national fund, to which they are called on to subscribe, be extended to, and made to include, the manufacturing districts and unemployed operatives of the West of Scotland, as well as of Lancashire and Cheshire.[74]

John MacGregor of Kilbarchan, also wrote to the Herald criticising the Lancashire fund, on the basis that Paisley also needed assistance:

> I am certain a vast amount of misery exists in Paisley and surrounding neighbourhood equally worthy of attention, and in the eye of reason demanding similar relief. Surely some intelligent human person [sic] will attend this meeting, and distinctly state the very great hardships felt by the working classes in Paisley and the villages around, that the distress of these poor subjects may be duly considered, and some measure of relief afforded to those who are, without doubt, in destitute circumstances, and who have long and patiently endured severe privations.[75]

A lively discussion on this subject broke out at a meeting of Paisley Town Council on 2nd December 1862 after the Provost announced that the Lord-Lieutenant of the County had called a Renfrewshire meeting to arrange support for Lancashire. Mr Kirkland called for Renfrewshire to be substituted for Lancashire, and Mr Robertson argued that "more distress in proportion existed here than in Lancashire, if it were known." "Oh no," remarked Mr Russell, after which the matter was dropped.[76] This illustrates perfectly the importance of this issue in Paisley. The perpetual comparisons with Lancashire were obviously arousing anger in some, such as Mr Robertson, to the point where they manipulated the statistics to prove their point. This tactic was also used by the Renfrewshire Independent, which argued that the distress in Paisley was such that "with reference to population, and taking dependents into view, gives a much higher ratio than Glasgow."[77]

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74 The Paisley Herald, 22.11.62.
75 The Paisley Herald, 29.11.62.
76 The Paisley Herald, 6.12.62.
77 The Renfrewshire Independent, 18.4.63.

The unemployed of Paisley quickly organised themselves, and prepared a petition to be delivered to the Earl of Glasgow before the County Meeting. The petition outlined the distress suffered in Paisley and maintained that:

> any general or national subscription for the relief of manufacturing distress should embrace the unemployed operatives of Scotland as well of England; otherwise, it is the duty of the noblemen and gentlemen of Scotland, and of Renfrew in particular, to attend first to the relief of the distress at their own doors, and to give their subscriptions accordingly.[78]

The County of Renfrew Lancashire Distress meeting took place in the County Hall, Paisley, on 6th December 1862. The Earl of Glasgow, in the chair, alluded to the claims made by Paisley for relief, but stated that, "I have made enquiry about that distress, and I must confess that I cannot find out where the distress exists." The Earl argued that the two best determinants of prosperity were the number of applicants for poor relief and the amount of deposits and withdrawals from the banks. In the case of the former, the Earl provided the following statistics:

Applicants for Poor-Relief in Paisley

	Abbey Parish	Burgh Parish	Total
1856	62	93	155
1857	400	670	1070
1858	103	113	216
1859	91	99	190
1860	88	92	180
1861	172	317	489
1862	111	155	266

Table 8.5: Paisley Poor-Relief Applications, 1856-1862 (the Paisley Herald, 13.12.62).

78 The Paisley Herald, 6.12.62.

The main problem with these statistics is the fact that the able-bodied were not allowed relief, so may well have not applied for relief. As for the second method of calculating prosperity, by examining the number of withdrawals from the banks, is concerned, we need to exercise caution in assuming that the operatives and weavers had bank accounts to draw upon, although the 1862 Annual Report of the National Security Savings Bank of Paisley, stated that:

> many working people have found their small store of savings in the Bank serve them well in the day of need ... in the Quarter ending 31st December last, the payments to Depositors were 232 more in number, and £612 18s 6d greater in amount, than during the same quarter of 1860.[79]

The Earl went on to describe the aid which Lancashire had provided for Renfrewshire during the 1841-2 depression, and argued that it was time for Renfrewshire to return the generosity. He then stated that "it would be against all our experience if things got worse after spring, as the various branches of trade in Paisley and elsewhere might be expected to revive." Time, of course, would quickly prove him wrong. Mr McDowall raised the fact that it was the American War that was causing the distress and the shortage of cotton was likely to exist for the duration of that conflict. Mr Henry Dunlop of Craigton stressed that Glasgow and Renfrewshire were the main areas of cotton manufacture in Scotland and that distress at home should not be neglected when aid was being given elsewhere.[80] In December, the Paisley Herald described how the Greenock Committee, which had been raising subscriptions for the distressed operatives had decided to only give one-sixth of the subscriptions to Lancashire, and would distribute the rest throughout Renfrewshire.[81] The need for local exertions was reiterated at a meeting of the General Committee of the County of Renfrew Lancashire Relief Fund in the County Hall, Paisley, on 5th January

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79 Paisley Pamphlets, P.C. 298, 39 (1860-62), p. 390.
80 The Paisley Herald, 13.12.62.
81 The Paisley Herald, 27.12.62.

1863. In consequence of what the meeting described as "better and brightening" prospects, it was decided that "it would not be necessary to have a county meeting for relief of destitution in Renfrewshire."[82]

Further controversy arose in the summer of 1863 over the level of assistance given to Lancashire. One way in which the Government attempted to help Lancashire was through the Public Works (Manufacturing Districts) Act, passed in July 1863. The Act provided work for the unemployed operatives, through work on urban drainage, water supplies, parks and sanitary arrangements.[83] On 29th June, a meeting was held in the Philosophical Hall, Paisley, to discuss the Public Works Bill, and to call for the extension of the Bill to Scotland, as well as the perpetual demand of the Paisley activists for money to be advanced for emigration. Mr John Boyd occupied the chair and Robert Cochran moved the following resolutions:

> 1. That the bill introduced into Parliament by Mr Villiers, MP, to authorise her Majesty's Government to make advances of public money for the employment of distressed operatives in drainage, laying off [sic] public parks, reclaiming moss lands, and other improvements, ought to be made to extend to Scotland, its limitation to England being most unjust to distressed operatives in other parts of the kingdom.
>
> 2. That in Paisley advances of public money are required for the employment of distressed operatives, and they might be beneficially set to work in cleansing and embanking the Cart betwixt the bridges; also in laying off [sic] a public park and race ground. Further, in consequence of the pollution of the river by dye works and chemical works, there is no opportunity of bathing, and there is great need for baths and wash-houses, for which also advances might be made.
>
> 3. That the trade of handloom weaving, so far as regards plain goods, is almost wholly superseded by steam power, and the handloom weavers of the West of Scotland are most desirous of changing their occupation, and going to Canada, and it would be wise and enlightened policy to assist them to do so, for which purpose Parliament should give authority to Government to make advances - burghs and parochial boards being constituted trustees for behoof of the emigrants, and the foresaid Public Works Bill ought accordingly to include such authority.[84]

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82 The Paisley Herald, 10.1.63.

83 See Aspin, C. 'Cotton's Legacy'. In The Lancashire Cotton Industry: A History Since 1700, pp. 325-55. Edited by Mary B. Rose. Preston, 1996.

84 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 4.7.63.

The question of providing relief for Lancashire at a time when Paisley was itself suffering the effects of the cotton famine, highlights again the strength of local feeling in the town. The people of Paisley felt that their needs were being overlooked by both the Westminster and the Glasgow authorities, whom it was felt, were underestimating the extent of Paisley's suffering. This therefore illustrates the sense in which Paisley viewed itself as separate from the Glasgow and West of Scotland cotton industry; and how, by implication, it felt that the Glasgow relief authorities also viewed it as a separate entity, and not deserving of relief.

The Relationship between Paisley's Distress and Its Civil War Attitudes

Despite the distress caused in Paisley by the Cotton Famine, there is no evidence to suggest that this distress influenced attitudes towards the two combatants in the American Civil War. In the reported meetings of unemployed cotton operatives no mention was made of the North or the South, and fault was not applied to either. This will help us to ascertain the importance of economic factors in the formulation of Civil War opinions. Given that the distressed operatives and their leaders did not blame either side during the War, this implies that economic difficulties were not in the minds of Paisley commentators expressing their opinions upon the Civil War. The next chapter will show that observers looked instead to the political and moral aspects of the conflict when forming their attitudes. There is one further way, however, that we can attempt to establish a link between industrial conditions in Paisley, and the town's attitude towards the War. This can be done by examining the nature of industrial relations in Paisley, in order to determine whether Augar's assertion that the nature of industrial relations was influential on Lancashire Civil War opinions, also applied to Paisley.

In his study of the Lancashire Cotton Famine, Augar cited local industrial relations as an important factor in the determination of Civil War opinion. By comparing

the size of the workforce in Lancashire cotton mills in 1863, Augar found that those towns with average mill-size of over 200 persons were more likely to witness confrontations between workers and their employers, "in terms of strikes, responses to poor relief, attitudes to the Standard List or to the American Civil War."[85] Allied to this, Augar found that those towns which exhibited most confrontation also exhibited more pro-Northern sentiments. This was, he claimed, due to the leadership of these workers: "where the cotton operatives were used to heeding the advice of working-class, radical leaders intent on preserving the right to independent action, pro-Federal views were most commonly expressed."[86] Paisley is very interesting in this regard. We saw in Table 8.1 that mill-size in the town was very large on the whole, especially in the mills of J. & P. Coats, Clark, and Kerr. Even when we take the average of the mill-size in Paisley, the figure was more than 300 persons. Therefore, by Augar's definition, Paisley was a town home to a large mill workforce. It appears, however, that there was little confrontation between workers and employers in Paisley, a fact which may be due to the predominance of female employees in the Paisley thread mills, which resulted in minimal trade union activity.[87] This coincided with a distinct lack of apparent confrontation during the Cotton Famine in Paisley when, as we have seen, no criticism was directed by operatives towards their employers.

Why then, when radical groups such as the Paisley Parliamentary Reform Association were voicing their support for the North so vigorously (as we shall see in the next chapter), did the unemployed operatives not follow the P.P.R.A.'s lead, and blame the South for their distress? The answer to this question could lie again in the nature of the industrial relations of Paisley, in a different sense to that suggested by Augar. We have already asserted that industrial relations in the thread mills were good, as a result

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85 Augar, 'Cotton Famine', p. 312.
86 Augar, 'Cotton Famine', p. 308.
87 Knox, Hanging by a Thread, pp. 177-8.

of a largely feminised workforce, and the paternalistic style of employers such as Coats and Clark. Macdonald's work also uncovered an interesting phenomenon in nineteenth century Paisley which can help us to explain the diverse strands of opinion expressed about the American Civil War. The class consensus which Clarke and Dickson identified in early nineteenth century Paisley was accompanied by "more 'covert' forms of political action, committed to revolutionary and republican ideologies."[88] Macdonald identified that these conflicting ideologies became stronger in the later nineteenth century which meant that a consensus was harder to achieve. She claimed that this conflict was exacerbated by the move towards large-scale thread manufacture and the dominance of females in the textile industry. As a result, there occurred, "a segmentation of the local labour market into primary (skilled, male) and secondary (unskilled, female) sectors across which the old values of the 'weaver interest' proved ineffectual in achieving any unifying 'class' or cultural influence."[89] This analysis helps us in our treatment of Paisley's reaction to the American Civil War. The revolutionary and republican elements of Paisley society could be found in the P.P.R.A. which campaigned for major political reform in Britain, and advanced the cause of the North. The other, less confrontational, side of Paisley - its millworkers, were less likely to take this stand, and were without the antagonism which Augar identified as consistent with Northern support.

Therefore, this presents us with two main conclusions. Firstly, Augar's correlation between mill-size and the level of industrial confrontation in Lancashire, when applied to Paisley, does not exist. This proves that different localities had different experiences, and we should not over-generalise. Secondly, what Augar's theory does confirm, is how Civil War attitudes were not influenced by economic factors alone, a viewpoint echoed by Pole, who argued that "when the [cotton] shortage began to be felt . . . the general lack of sympathy for Southern institutions among the British workers was to be a non-economic

[88] Macdonald, 'Locality, Tradition and Language', p. 54.
[89] Macdonald, 'Locality, Tradition and Language', p. 54.

determinant."[90] In the context of Paisley we will also see that political factors, such as attitudes towards parliamentary reform, were more important in the formulation of Civil War attitudes.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the extent of the economic distress caused by the American Civil War and the Cotton Famine in Paisley. Shortages of raw materials affected cotton factories and the thread works to differing degrees, although most of them experienced either redundancies or short hours. The extent to which this unemployment and short time caused severe distress is debatable, as we have seen, but it is important to note that 77 per cent of thread workers were women, so it is possible that many heads of families were still in work, therefore minimising poverty.[91] The one thing that did exacerbate the situation caused by the Cotton Famine was unemployment among the handloom weaving community of Paisley. This was caused mainly by the 1860 Cobden Treaty with France and the growing reliance of the industry on power looms. In discussing the impact of the American Civil War on Paisley's cotton industry, however, we should recognise not only the economic distress caused by the war, but also the social and political consequences which flowed from the distress.

The immediate conclusion which we can reach is the similarity of Paisley's experience during the Cotton Famine in the 1860s, with its previous experience of economic distress in the 1840s. The first manifestation of this trend was the antagonism which arose between Paisley and Glasgow in 1863, with the former accusing the latter of ignoring Paisley's plight, and the Glasgow authorities pushing Paisley to rely to a greater extent on its own local provision. This is reminiscent of the conflict between Paisley and London in 1842 and 1843, during which the British Government rejected Paisley's demands for

[90] Pole, Lincoln and the Working Classes, p. 27.
[91] Knox, Hanging by a Thread, p. 78.

official relief.[92] Both these periods of distress raised the issue of where the responsibility of providing relief lay: with the immediate locality or central authorities; and with public provision or private charity. We have also seen how criticism of the provisions of the Poor Law were voiced in the 1860s as a result of the able-bodied poor being denied relief. This also coincides with the experience of the economic distress in 1841-43 in Paisley, as criticisms voiced against the Poor Law led directly to the 1845 Poor Law Reform.[93]

A major issue in the study of the history of Paisley is whether agitation in the town was based on community collaboration, or was divided along class lines. Smout emphasised the former as being the most prevalent in Paisley, describing "the strength of community as opposed to class feeling in confrontations between the provinces and the State."[94] Clarke and Dickson, in their study of class consciousness in Paisley, described how class collaboration existed in Paisley as a result of sectional divisions within the local working class.[95] As a result, middle class Radicals, including small manufacturers, merchants and traders, formed an alliance with the artisan weavers of the town against the landed aristocracy, in favour of political reform. Leitch, in his study of Paisley Radicalism, also emphasised the importance of the weavers in fostering Radicalism in Paisley.[96] He also indicated that co-operation took place between the enfranchised and the disenfranchised during general elections in the town, although he argued that there was a growing tendency towards class consciousness in Paisley during this period.[97] The experience of Paisley during the Cotton Famine of the 1860s confirms that there was little class conflict in the town over the issue of economic distress. Unlike Lancashire, where

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92 Smout, 'Paisley in Depression', pp. 229-31.
93 Smout, 'Paisley in Depression', p. 225.
94 Smout, 'Paisley in Depression', p. 218.
95 Clarke & Dickson 'Class and Class Consciousness'.
96 Leitch, 'Radicalism in Paisley', p. 31.
97 Leitch, 'Radicalism in Paisley', p. 111, p. 240.

criticism was levied at factory owners for not doing enough to help the unemployed operatives, in Paisley such criticism did not arise. This is very interesting, because it suggests that even though factory size in Paisley was very large in the 1860s, there did not appear to be much conflict with the employers. In their study of Paisley in the 1840s, Clarke and Dickson suggested that Paisley's political activity in that decade differed to that in the Lancashire town of Oldham because of "the absence [in Paisley] of a large factory proletariat."[98] In the 1860s such a factory proletariat did exist in Paisley, yet conflict did not arise between the workers and their employers. Instead, criticism was aimed at the Government and charitable organisations for their neglect of Paisley, therefore raising the subject of local identity rather than class prejudice. The Government and the Monarch were called upon to provide aid for emigration initially on the basis that there was insufficient relief being offered to Paisley, in comparison with Lancashire. After this, demands turned to the movement constituted to provide assistance to Lancashire. This was unfair, argued the unemployed of Paisley, when there were so many in need closer to home. Pressure was put upon wealthy Scottish individuals to only contribute to the subscription if it was extended to cover the West of Scotland, and otherwise to withhold donations and instead look after their own localities. Again, local identity seemed to be the key factor here. We have already described in detail the conflict between the Paisley authorities and the Glasgow Relief Committee, over the question of aid to Paisley, and again the town appeared to be united in its hostility to the reluctance of Glasgow to offer assistance to the unemployed of Paisley.

Paisley's response to the Cotton Famine also paralleled its past behaviour in terms of the non-violent means through which it argued its case. Even though suffering from economic distress as a result of the dearth of cotton, and having to submit to the refusals of the Government, the Poor Law, and the Glasgow Relief Committee to give aid

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[98] Clarke and Dickson, 'Class and Class Consciousness', p. 54.

to the town, the unemployed did not resort to violent measures as a means of protest, and instead continued to meet peacefully to discuss their situation and offer petitions to Parliament and the other relevant bodies. This behaviour was consistent with that described by Smout as occurring in the town in the 1840s, when, contrary to contemporary expectations, violence did not occur, and persuasion was preferred as a tool of protest.[99] The most significant thing which arises out of this discussion, however, is how little the two belligerents in the American Civil War were blamed for the distress caused by the Cotton Famine. Instead, the people of Paisley blamed the relief authorities for their hardship. In the next chapter, we will see how factors such as political attitudes and allegiances were much more important than economic ones in the formulation of opinions on the American Civil War.

[99] Smout, 'Paisley in Depression', p. 240.

Chapter 9: Paisley Attitudes towards the American Civil War

Chapter 9: Paisley Attitudes towards the American Civil War

We have already seen how the opinions of British Liberals during the American Civil War offered an interesting perspective upon the myriad of issues which the War provoked. Some Liberals supported the Confederacy on the basis of its right to independence, while opposition to slavery and support for Northern free democratic institutions were the main issues which made other Liberals support the North. Other Liberals, such as the Whig and Palmerstonian factions of the party, who were opposed to electoral reform, were critical of the extreme nature of American democracy, and blamed it for the break-up of the American Union.[1] This split in Liberal opinion was an extremely common one, with Wright describing its effect in the Yorkshire town of Leeds, where "divergent opinion . . . on the Civil War emphasized the differences, not only between Liberals and Conservatives but also between moderate Liberals and Radicals."[2] This chapter will show how the town of Paisley exhibited similar tendencies, with its strong Liberal tradition characterised by this same division of opinion, with two Liberal newspapers in favour of the South, one Liberal newspaper swinging between support for the North and the South, and a strong pro-North movement organised by a group of local radicals. It will be shown that a number of factors influenced Paisley opinions during the American Civil War, but that attitudes towards political reform at home, support for the right of nations to self-determination, and the slavery issue were of particular significance. Again, we will see that economic conditions had little effect upon Civil War attitudes.

In 1861 Paisley was home to three Liberal newspapers, a clear demonstration of the political culture of the town. The town's Conservative paper, the Paisley Advertiser, had ceased publication in 1850. The remaining papers differed in their interpretations of Liberal politics, however. The Glasgow Saturday Post and Paisley and Renfrewshire

[1] Botsford, 'Civil War', vol. 2, pp. 607-8.
[2] Wright, 'Leeds and the Civil War', p. 120.

Reformer was the most radical of the three papers, advocating radical policies such as household suffrage, triennial parliaments, and the ballot. The paper was edited by James Henderson. The Paisley Herald and Renfrewshire Advertiser, owned and edited by Richard Watson, and the Renfrewshire Independent and Paisley Weekly Journal, owned and edited by James Waterson, were both Liberal papers, but more moderate than the Glasgow Saturday Post. The newspaper press of Paisley provides us with one perspective upon the opinions which the town held. Other perspectives include the role played by local political groups, the attitudes of business people, and the thoughts and actions of the town's working people, predominantly employed in the thread mills. These different factors contributed to the existence of a distinct political identity in Paisley which had existed in the town since the eighteenth century and which was sustained throughout the nineteenth century. This chapter will examine Civil War attitudes in the context of this political identity, and will illustrate that deep-rooted political ideology was much more important than short term economic expediency in the formulation of these attitudes.

November 1860 - December1861: The First Year of the War

The reactions of the Liberal newspapers of Paisley at the outbreak of the Civil War confirm the views of Hernon, McPherson and Whitridge, in showing how Liberal opinion was split during the War.[3] The 1860 presidential election gave the local press the first opportunity to express their opinions on the American situation, and it also illustrated the different approach which the papers took towards American affairs. The Renfrewshire Independent illustrated the importance which it placed upon the issue of slavery when it described the election as a contest between abolition and slavery, and criticised the South's threat of secession: "the Southern States threaten, as they have done before, to dissolve the Union, and eventually, we suppose, league themselves with

[3] Hernon, 'British Sympathies'; McPherson, Battle Cry, pp. 552-3; Whitridge, 'British Liberals'.

the Czar of Russia, the Emperor of Austria, and other recognisers of divine rights and the political or domestic institution of niggerdom."[4] At this stage, therefore, the issue of slavery was convincing some Liberals to take a stand against the South. The Paisley Herald recognised the importance that slavery played in the election, but urged the North not to attack the Southern States over slavery. Instead it suggested that the North should "check the policy of extending slavery and increasing its political power to prevent the slave interest from any longer imposing its claims and interests upon the Federal Government."[5] The Herald seemed to be unaware that this was the essence of the South's grievance. Lincoln did not stand for election on an abolition platform; he had pledged to leave slavery alone in those states where it already existed, and only wanted to stop its extension into the territories. It was the future prospect of an imbalance in Congress, dominated by Free States, that had caused such consternation in the South. The Glasgow Saturday Post also argued that the election heralded the end of slavery, and it signalled the significance which the issue of democracy would play during the American Civil War, and pondered the paradox which the election had raised for those who were arguing against democratic reform in Britain. The election had heralded the end of slavery, but it had been the popular vote of a republic which had brought it about:

> the late presidential election in America ostensibly turned upon the question of slavery, and as the result has proved acceptable on that ground to parties in this country who are by no means friendly to the popular vote that has secured Mr Lincoln in the Presidency, ingenuity is taxed how to say a good thing in favour of the actual result, and at the same time to asperse the means by which the result has been attained.[6]

This paradox illustrates the way in which American events cut across British allegiances, with Conservatives in favour of abolition, and ready to praise America for its moves

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[4] The Renfrewshire Independent, 24.11.60.

[5] The Paisley Herald, 24.11.60.

[6] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 1.12.60.

towards abolition, but against the universal suffrage which brought about that abolition. In the early stages of the American troubles, before the firing upon Fort Sumter, the Renfrewshire Independent was hostile towards the South, perhaps an indication again of the precedence which it gave to the slavery issue. It argued that the North had given the South no cause to secede, and that the Southern States were insurrectionists, rebelling against the federal government; an important claim, as under international law, insurrectionists were denied the status of belligerents:

> the President has made no menace against slaveholders in the South, has spoken temperately of their opposition and considerately of their claims, and without further reason or cause have the hot-headed leaders of South Carolina passed a resolution in a pet, which implies their defiance of Federal law, and open rebellion to the Central Government.[7]

The Herald disagreed with this analysis, and claimed that separation was the inevitable and preferable option. It argued that the maintenance of the Union would perpetuate slavery, and that "the separation of the American Union into two distinct sovereign states would operate very powerfully in checking that filibustering and aggressive spirit which prevails to such an extent amongst the citizens of the republic."[8] The Herald was beginning to indicate the basis of its stance during the Civil War: slavery stood more chance of abolition under a separate Confederacy, and divided into two nations, the American continent would pose less of a threat to other nations. While the Glasgow Saturday Post did not offer a firm opinion on American events at this stage, the paper did indicate that its sympathies tended to lie with the South, because it supported its desire to be independent, and in March 1861, the paper called on the Northern people "to accept the situation provided for them, and quietly make up their minds to allow the rebellious tribes of the family to make an experiment of self-government and independence."[9]

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[7] The Renfrewshire Independent, 12.1.61.

[8] The Paisley Herald, 1.12.60.

[9] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 2.3.61.

At a meeting at the United Presbyterian Church in Abbey Close, Paisley, on 23rd April 1861, Reverend Dr Cheever of New York spoke on 'The Present Responsibility of the British Government and People towards the Slave Confederacy of the United States.' The Reverend Cheever was pastor of an abolitionist church in New York, the Congregational Church of the Puritans, and was a renowned abolitionist activist.[10] Dr Cheever urged the British people not to recognise the Confederacy, even on economic grounds.[11] The Saturday Post responded by suggesting that arguments employed against Confederate recognition could be used "with equal force against our recognition of the Northern section of the Union until we have a more uncompromising and emphatic declaration of anti-slavery principles from them than we have yet had."[12] This illustrates how the North's refusal to embrace abolitionism was beginning to prevent it gaining international support, even amongst Liberals. This was an extremely common tendency, as we saw in Dumfriesshire, and Allen described how as the War progressed through 1861, "there began a vital process by which the North sank in English [sic] esteem," as awareness grew that the War was not a simple fight between slavery and freedom.[13]

The Renfrewshire Independent was alone in supporting the North throughout 1861, and its support also alluded to the issue of democracy as well as its support for abolition. The paper challenged those who welcomed the war for marking the end of the 'democratic experiment,' and argued that "Republicanism is *not on its trial* at present, but only the political problem, [of] how long independent states, depending for their existence upon different elements of social life, can co-operate *together* as a confederated body."[14] The paper was suggesting that the troubles were exclusive to America, and democracy

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[10] For details of Cheever's tours in Scotland, and Scottish support for him, see Botsford, 'Civil War', vol.1, pp. 31-9, pp.106-16, pp. 353-9.

[11] The Paisley Herald, 27.4.61.

[12] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 27.4.61.

[13] Allen, H.C. Great Britain and the United States: A History of Anglo-American Relations (1783-1952). London, 1954, p. 459.

[14] The Renfrewshire Independent, 31.8.61.

would not have the same implications in Britain. The Herald, on the other hand, supported the Confederate fight for independence throughout 1861. In its opinion, the North could not win because its army had no cause to fight for. The South, however, had a cause that was "clear and definite - separation and independence - nothing more and nothing less."[15] While the Herald naturally opposed slavery openly, its comments echoed those often expressed by pro-slavery Southerners: it called for the free labour of blacks, arguing that whites were ill-fitted for the picking of cotton in warm climates, but was concerned that "as a rule the negro will not work like the white man unless under compulsion of a stronger kind than is exercised by the pressure of his ordinary wants."[16] The paper continued to maintain that once separated, the States could never be reunited, concluding on 20th July that, "if the inhabitants of the Seceded States are determined to remain disunited from the Union, it is not in the power of the Federal Government to compel them to act otherwise."[17] The paper denied that it opposed democratic government, claiming in September that it supported the theory of American government, but it felt that the practical operation of the American system was seriously deficient. An example of this followed the North's seizure of Northern newspapers which accepted the inevitability of Southern secession, whereupon the Herald criticised both sides in the conflict: "as an admirer of the theory of the American Government, we deeply regret to observe some of its best principles unable apparently, to stand the test to which they have been subjected, and to be equally violated by both sides in the present contest."[18] This was consistent with other Scottish Liberal criticism of American democracy,[19] and illustrates how important attitudes towards democracy were in the formulation of Civil War opinions. We will see in this thesis that the views of papers such as the Paisley Herald

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15 The Paisley Herald, 11.5.61.
16 The Paisley Herald, 22.6.61.
17 The Paisley Herald, 20.7.61.
18 The Paisley Herald, 7.9.61.
19 Botsford, 'Civil War', vol.2, pp. 607-8.

were increasingly determined by their wariness about the 'extreme' nature of American democracy.

The Trent Affair provided commentators with the opportunity to debate American affairs in terms of their direct effect upon British interests. The Herald called for British aggression towards the Northern States over the Trent affair, not just from a perspective of self-interest, but as a result of the benefits which this would afford to the Southern States. It maintained that "little if any opposition would be offered to our government avenging the insult by forcibly abolishing the blockade of the Southern ports, and rendering the navy of the Northern States a useless encumbrance instead of a formidable means of attacking the Confederates."[20] The paper questioned the consistency of the North: "the Northern States have always stoutly alleged that the Southern States movement is merely a rebellion against the Federal Government, and that the Southern States are no nation, and consequently have no Commissioners! Why then seize them?"[21] Following the North's climb-down over the Trent affair, the Herald concluded that "although the American rowdies are as brave as lions, a mere growl seems to have awakened the idea that discretion in the present case is the better part of valour."[22] The Independent initially believed that the Trent incident was deliberately orchestrated to divert the North away from its conquest of the slave states.[23] The surrender of the Confederate Commissioners Mason and Slidell gave the Independent the opportunity to again praise republican government as "fit to cope with the greatest difficulties, to defy popular prejudices, and to risk collision with popular passions rather than recognise an illegal as a legal act."[24] It is interesting to note that this was the last time that the Independent supported the North's actions until 1865.

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[20] The Paisley Herald, 30.11.61.
[21] The Paisley Herald, 7.12.61.
[22] The Paisley Herald, 4.1.62.
[23] The Renfrewshire Independent, 14.12.61.
[24] The Renfrewshire Independent, 11.1.62.

The first year of the Civil War led the three Paisley newspapers to take notably different stances. The Herald was firmly in favour of the Confederacy, supporting its right to secede, and welcoming the end of the American Union, even to the extent of calling for British intervention on behalf of the South following the Trent affair. The Independent, on the other hand, offered its full support to the North, arguing that the South had not been given any reason to secede. The Saturday Post did not adopt a strong stance during 1861, but tended to support the South on the grounds of its right to independence. Here we can see then, a liberal paper and a radical paper supporting the Confederacy from the outset of the War. Their stance was a fairly common one amongst some liberals and radicals who were firmly opposed to slavery, but believed in the right of a people to self-determination. Such commentators also regarded the North as a violent oppressor rather than a friend of liberty. Doubts about the political system of the United States also arose as a factor. Although the Paisley papers shared Liberal politics, doubts about the American form of democracy did exist, especially in its republican form. The Herald, for example, stated in its retrospective of 1861, that cynicism towards republicanism was well-deserved. The main problem inherent in the American republic, argued the Herald, was its lack of adaptability: "Republican institutions, by reason of their defect of elasticity, have seldom been found capable of surviving a crisis or overcoming a shock in the social system."[25]

The future economic effects which the War would inevitably bring upon Paisley also began to be raised during 1861. When the Independent became aware of the grave consequences which the American conflict would have on Paisley's industrial population, its commitment to the Union remained, as it stated that "we have no right to vindicate slavery even to prevent so serious an issue."[26] The Paisley editorial of the Saturday Post stressed that British trade was the most important issue at stake and argued that the

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[25] The Paisley Herald, 4.1.62.

[26] The Renfrewshire Independent, 12.1.61.

break-up of the Union would not endanger this trade, because "even if [the] South gains independence and [is] still a slave power, we can still trade with her because we have not had a problem with trade with the United States of America."[27] In April, the Saturday Post even began to support calls for Southern recognition, based upon the benefits to trade which it would bring: "there is no doubt . . . that the commercial policy with which the Confederated Southern States are inaugurating their career is propitiating the old country and leading it to look more favourably upon their pretensions to independence."[28] In June, the Saturday Post raised the issue of the impact of the cotton blockade upon Paisley, stating that:

> in this town, we have had every reason to congratulate ourselves, upon the satisfactory manner in which our manufacturing and commercial interests, have withstood the shock arising from the derangement and all but total annihilation of the American trade, but, while we have no immediate cause to cry out, we cannot contemplate a continuation of the present state of matters, without much concern and disquietude.[29]

Economic concerns were clearly beginning to arise in Paisley, although we have seen that when the Cotton Famine hit Paisley, it did little to affect Civil War opinions.

The first year of the American Civil War and the Paisley reactions to it illustrated the nature of the local identity of the town. While support for the North was minimal, this does not indicate that there was a lack of Liberalism in Paisley. Pro-Southern sentiments arose out of support for the right of the South to govern itself, rather than support for Southern aristocracy and slavery. There was, however, a tendency for those commentators who were cautious about democratic reform at home to withhold support for the North. Nevertheless, the opinions expressed by the press were liberal-rooted, and later years of the Civil War would illustrate the growing importance of Paisley's radical tradition with respect to the town's attitude towards the War.

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[27] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 19.1.61.
[28] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 13.4.61.
[29] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 29.6.61.

1862: Convergence Amongst Paisley Liberals and the Role of the Paisley Radicals

The second year of the American Civil War saw an interesting trend in Paisley. The newspapers converged in their opinions, with a shift towards an anti-Northern position, provoked by support for Southern independence and opposition to the North's stance on the slavery issue. By 1862, there was an awareness that the North was not basing its fight on an abolitionist platform, and consequently opposition towards the North began to grow. Abolitionist views did not necessarily determine Civil War opinions any longer. Northern support in Paisley came only from a radical group, the Paisley Parliamentary Reform Association, which campaigned vociferously in favour of the North, a campaign which even led to comment in the British and American press. This year was also significant because it saw Paisley suffering the effects of the Cotton Famine. We will see, however, that the distress described in the previous chapter did not influence Civil War attitudes.

A common trend can be seen when we examine the political speeches of Liberal Members of Parliament such as William Ewart of Dumfries and Humphrey Crum Ewing of Paisley. They tended to refrain from direct comment upon issues such as the American Civil War, whether through fear of alienating their supporters or through the common desire to be on the winning side. On January 8th, 1862, Crum Ewing went further than usual in applauding the separation of the United States at a meeting with his constituents in the Moss St. Exchange Rooms. In discussion of the Civil War, he suggested that the separation of the States was a good thing, because of the restraint which would be placed upon the growing American continent:

> we have deplored the civil war going on between the Northern and Southern States of America, and a wish has prevailed very generally that if a separation of the States was to take place, it might be done peaceably, and without the disorder and bloodshed so injurious to commerce and afflicting to humanity. I would not conceal that not a few were desirous to see such a separation, hoping that thereby the domineering spirit that has become a characteristic of the Americans, and which seems to make them think themselves greater than any other people, and entitled to lay down their own dictum, whether right or wrong, as law to all other nations, might be lowered somewhat.[30]

The 'domineering spirit' which Crum Ewing spoke of could be taken as a criticism of the North for trying to prevent the extension of slavery, or of the South for trying to extend it to the new territories. Most likely, however, is that Crum Ewing was referring to American desires for territorial expansion, thinking particularly about the acquisition of Texas and Oregon. The growth in the size of the United States led many to believe that America was becoming too powerful and arrogant. The separation of the States led many to believe, therefore, that such expansionism would end, as well as the threat to British North America. The fact that Crum Ewing felt able to express this opinion suggests that there was sympathy in Paisley for this view, a factor which may also help to explain the anti-North bias of the local newspapers.

The Liberal attitude in Paisley against the Northern States intensified in 1862. In February, the Herald remained convinced that the Union was irreparable. It stressed that independence, not slavery, was the crucial issue: "neither our dislike of slavery, nor our feeling towards either of the parties, can blind us to the fact that the Federal Union in America can never be restored and maintained by force if the Southerners are nearly unanimously resolved to be no longer an integral part of that Union."[31] Slavery continued to be the crucial issue for the Renfrewshire Independent, however, but now the issue turned the paper against the North. It despaired at the North's reluctance to advocate abolition, and doubted "that the struggle with the South involves any greater question

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[30] The Paisley Herald, 11.1.62.

[31] The Paisley Herald, 22.2.62.

than the vindication of authority, and the right to impose heavier taxation upon the South."[32] The Renfrewshire Independent's change of heart was similar to that experienced by other over-optimistic Liberals. Pole described how, in the early stages of the War, "the supporters of 'the Federals' and opponents of slavery were free to indulge the most extravagant expectations; which, in the first six months or so of war, were destined to collapse in a commensurate degree of bitter disappointment."[33] Likewise, we have seen how the Independent moved from its 1861 position, when it described the War as a "crusade against the south and slavery,"[34] to the despondent attitude expressed above in January 1862. In February the paper continued to illustrate its growing lack of sympathy with the Northern cause, and commenting upon Lincoln's decision to replace Secretary of War Simon Cameron with the anti-Abolitionist Democrat Edwin M. Stanton, it concluded that "we are more than ever forced to regard the collision between the North and South as a struggle for purely territorial or commercial aggression."[35] The Independent's new stance also led it to see the possible benefits to be gained from separation. It argued that abolition was no longer likely to occur if the States were reunited as "the speedy recovery of Southern territory to the Union points rather to the permanence of slavery in its present form, protected by a Fugitive Act and the prestige of a free Government, than to the spread of an abolitionist movement."[36] The Independent's acceptance that the abolition of slavery was not the objective of the War led it to support mediation by France and Great Britain in the conflict. In its opinion:

> the figment that this war was an abolition struggle has ceased to be believed in; and while its continuance is mainly associated with the ambition of adventurous soldiers and unscrupulous statesmen to complete an impossible conquest, we can regard with something warmer than complacency every reasonable project to put an end to it.[37]

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[32] The Renfrewshire Independent, 25.1.62.
[33] Pole, Lincoln and the Working Classes, p. 9.
[34] The Renfrewshire Independent, 11.5.61.
[35] The Renfrewshire Independent, 8.2.62.
[36] The Renfrewshire Independent, 15.2.62.
[37] The Renfrewshire Independent, 17.5.62.

This change of heart is striking. From a position in 1861 which was forthright in its condemnation of the South on the grounds of slavery, the Independent had moved, by 1862, to the same type of condemnation of the North, as a result of the same issue. This underlines how important the issue of slavery was in the formulation of attitudes towards the American Civil War, whereby it led to support for both sides in the conflict. The Independent's change of mind matched that of the working-class Glasgow Sentinel, which Fraser described as moving from an anti-Confederate position in 1861, to a pro-Confederate one after James Watt took over the paper.[38] It is possible that the Independent was following the line of a paper such as the Sentinel.

In April 1862, the radical Glasgow Saturday Post illustrated that its sympathy for the South arose out of its support for Confederate independence. Formerly the paper had supported John Bright,[39] but it now criticised Bright for his claim that the North was upholding constitutional liberty, and the New York Chamber of Commerce for its praise of him. The paper retorted, "it would be well if both the Americans and some people among ourselves would endeavour to look at the great Republican conflict in its true light and not through a deluding mist that distorts and confounds all perceptions of its nature and proportions."[40] The paper continued:

> the war is for the subjugation of the rebellious states; and if either of the combatants has any right to prate about constitutional liberty it is the South, which asks no more than the right to manage its own affairs in its own way, and has not as yet given any indication of a desire to depart from constitutional principles of the sort that have uniformly been in vogue in America.[41]

When charged with the fact that the South wished to base its constitution on the existence of slavery, the Saturday Post retorted that "it should in all fairness be

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38 Fraser, Alexander Campbell, pp. 152-3.
39 Cowan, The Newspaper in Scotland, p. 338.
40 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 12.4.62.
41 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 12.4.62.

remembered that property in slaves is recognised under the constitution of the United States, and constitutional liberty has not hitherto been thought to be incompatible with the toleration of the institution - Mr Bright himself being witness."[42] When the North began to debate moves towards emancipation, the paper suggested that the consideration of emancipation was motivated by the debilitating effect it would have upon the Southern War machine.[43] The Glasgow Saturday Post's stand against the North is evidence of splits within the radical movement, with national self-determination being adopted as a radical policy. The stance taken by the Glasgow Saturday Post as a pro-reform and abolitionist newspaper is very similar to the stance taken by the Leeds Times, a radical paper which also supported the South during the Civil War.[44] The Leeds Times' hostility towards the North was due to its dislike of the tariff and American arrogance, sentiments which the Saturday Post also expressed at times.[45] Other Paisley radicals continued to support the North, however, the main example in Paisley being the Paisley Parliamentary Reform Association.

The Paisley Parliamentary Reform Association

The strongest illustration of the existence of a radical identity in Paisley during the American Civil War was the stance taken by the Paisley Parliamentary Reform Association in 1862. The Association was the latest radical group to be established in Paisley, following nearly a century of similar activity manifested in the Renfrewshire Political Union of the early 1830s, and the Parliamentary and Financial Reform Association of 1849. Further evidence of a sustained radical tradition is the continuity of membership of these organisations, with individuals such as Robert Cochran and

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42 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 12.4.62.
43 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 3.5.62.
44 Wright, 'Leeds and the Civil War', p. 110.
45 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 13.4.61, 31.5.62.

Alexander McAndrew active throughout the mid-nineteenth century period. Many meetings took place in Paisley to discuss the American Civil War, but the majority of meetings were held by the P.P.R.A., a radical association committed to political reform in Britain. The Association supported the Northern States, and expressed its views through public meetings and in letters to the Paisley Herald and the Renfrewshire Independent. On 19th May, 1862, a meeting of the Association was held at Mr Goodlet's large hall, High Street, with Alexander McAndrew, the President, a former weaver and a well-known local radical, in the Chair. Robert Cochran called for an address to be drawn up and sent to the American Government expressing support for their aims, but found there to be disquiet at the meeting over the suggestion. He refused to put forward the motion unless unanimity could be reached, and despite support from the seconder, Alexander Hutchison, the matter was dropped.[46]

The fact that disagreement existed within the P.P.R.A. became more evident at a meeting on 15th July 1862. William Colquhoun was the first to speak, stating that "it was the duty of the friends of freedom to give their support to the Government of America in their exertions to preserve the Union."[47] Colquhoun argued that the South seceded because it had lost its traditional domination of Government, and not because of a high-principled stance on independence. Mr Colquhoun then moved a motion, stating "that the Association transmit an address to President Lincoln and the other members of the American Government, expressing the gratification of this Association at the exertions they are now making to preserve the American Union."[48] Robert Cochran seconded the motion, arguing that the South should have sought redress through Congress if it had a grievance. Alluding to the support being expressed in Britain for the Confederacy, he pointed out that "the sympathy manifested by too many of the public journals of this

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46 The Renfrewshire Independent, 24.5.62.
47 The Renfrewshire Independent, 19.7.62.
48 The Renfrewshire Independent, 19.7.62.

country in favour of the South was not in accordance with the mind of the people, particularly of the working classes," and continued that "a people who desired independence that they might have the liberty of buying and selling three million and a half of human beings were unworthy of freedom."[49] One speaker, Mr Mitchell, suggested that the motion should be set aside for three months, as he argued that slavery was more likely to be eradicated if separation did take place, especially since the North showed no inclination to free the slaves. Alexander Hutchison denied this and maintained that President Lincoln supported gradual abolition. He also pointed out that Southerners themselves recognised that the war was about slavery. Mr Colin Black, described by Blair as a weaver and "enthusiastic Radical" in the 1840s and 1850s,[50] supported Mitchell's amendment, arguing that "the South had a right, by the constitutions of their respective states, to secede. The war . . . was caused by the oppression of the North."[51] The question of bringing the motion before the people of Paisley was then discussed, but Mr Hatchard argued that since the motion was aimed at adopting an association address, it was not necessary to put it to the public. He did think, however, that the public shared the opinion of the association. Robert Cochran agreed, stating that "the inhabitants of Paisley would never give countenance to or sanction the independence of a people who wished to perpetuate the horrid iniquity of buying and selling human beings."[52] Finally, the motion was carried by a considerable majority. Clearly, disquiet arose within the Association over the issue of slavery. The Association was a political reform movement, and members such as Robert Cochran and Alexander McAndrew were motivated by their support for democratic reform in advocating the Northern cause, while others expressed concern about the North's reluctance to abolish slavery, and expressed doubts about the

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[49] The Renfrewshire Independent, 19.7.62.
[50] Blair, Paisley Thread, p. 115.
[51] The Renfrewshire Independent, 19.7.62.
[52] The Renfrewshire Independent, 19.7.62.

North's aggression. This indicates that, amongst radicals, there was disagreement about the Civil War, and helps to explain the pro-Southern stance taken by the radical Glasgow Saturday Post.

On 24th July 1862, an address was sent to Washington from the Association. (see Appendix 1) The address drew much attention, and a discussion followed between Robert Cochran, on behalf of the P.P.R.A., and the Paisley Herald. The Herald criticised the P.P.R.A. for forgetting the principle "that the [Southern] people ought to have some say, at least, as to who is to rule over them, and as to the manner in which that rule is to be exercised."[53] In response to this, Robert Cochran wrote a letter to the paper, stating, "No, Sir, the members of the P.P.R.A. have not forgot their principles; and in addressing the American Government they have simply performed an act of duty, an expression of sympathy in the present sore trial of the American people."[54] Cochran criticised the Herald for siding with a pro-slavery party, and argued that the Southern States:

> of their own free will, entered into a friendly and perpetual Union with the States of the North, and so far from being oppressed by the people of the North during the history of the Republic, the Southern party have had, to a large extent, the government of the country in their possession.[55]

The Herald, in response to Mr Cochran's letter, argued that:

> the immense majority of the people of this town, as well as of Great Britain generally, are in favour of a permanent disruption of the American Union, founded on the intelligent belief that the peace and freedom, not only of America, but of the whole world, will be best promoted by such a consummation.[56]

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53 The Paisley Herald, 2.8.62.
54 The Paisley Herald, 9.8.62.
55 The Paisley Herald, 9.8.62.
56 The Paisley Herald, 16.8.62.

Cochran later wrote a letter to the Independent's columns, criticising the Herald for its editorials. Cochran continued to argue that the working classes overwhelmingly supported the Northern States, and that the Southern States had had the predominant power in America in the past, and it was only on losing this power that they had seceded.[57] This difference of opinion represented neatly the split which existed amongst British Liberals. On one side, Cochran argued that the Confederacy was upholding slavery and had no constitutional right to secede. He also claimed that most working class support was with the North, a position also taken by John Bright and Richard Cobden. The Herald, on the other hand, claimed that the South had a right to govern itself, and refuted the idea that working class support was with the North, instead asserting that the majority of British opinion sided with the Confederacy. This view is put forward by revisionist historians such as Peter d'A. Jones, who stated that the 'myth' of working class support for the North was used by "English Radicals-Liberals who needed the myth to help them fight the battle for parliamentary reform at home."[58]

The P.P.R.A.'s address also led to comment in the New York Times, which described how the Association:

> representing the industrial classes of that great manufacturing city, has forwarded an address to the authorities of this country, which is very different in its tone from the utterances of the aristocracy and snobocracy of England ... it gives proof that we have friends in Great Britain, and that these friends are those who suffer most terribly by the war, but who see in it an object which consecrates even their ownsorrows.[59]

The Association received a reply from Secretary of State William Seward, who thanked Paisley for its support, and criticised the rest of Europe for not exhibiting similar sentiments: "if all Europe could not only think but speak as you do, there would soon be no

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[57] The Renfrewshire Independent, 23.8.62.

[58] d' A. Jones, P. 'The History of a Myth - British Workers and the American Civil War.' Epilogue to Support for Secession, pp. 199-219. By Mary Ellison, p. 200.

[59] The New York Times, 13.8.62.

civil war or insurrection here."[60] Seward's reply gained attention in London, where the Times scathingly retorted that, "we are content not to know who the Paisley Parliamentary Reform Society are."[61] The construction of this address appeared to be the main objective of the Association, as very little attention was paid to the American Civil War at other times. The individual members of the Association, however, were vociferous in their defence of the North through their correspondence to the press and their attendance at other public meetings. What is most interesting, however, is that many members of the P.P.R.A. were adversely affected by the Cotton Famine, and the toll it took on Paisley's cotton industry, but still remained in favour of the North. It is clear that political beliefs were of more importance in determining Civil War attitudes than economic factors, at least amongst Paisley radicals. Despite its increasingly anti-Northern stance, the Independent was the only paper to report in full the activities of the Paisley Parliamentary Reform Association, possibly because of the paper's sympathy with calls for democratic reform.

The second half of 1862 saw the three newspapers united in their criticism of the Northern States and in agreement that the Northern aim of reuniting the Union was a hopeless one. In June, the Herald discussed the way Britain would react if faced with a similar situation: "judging only from the experience of the past, it might be presumed that Britain would show as much determination to preserve the empire entire as the Federal Union has shown to prevent the Southern secession."[62] Does the word 'empire' merely convey the Herald's attitude towards the British Empire, or does it also illustrate the paper's opinion of the American Union, especially given its opposition to American territorial expansion? Despite this, however, the Herald stood by its pro-Confederate position and attributed the same position to the rest of Britain. It stated that:

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60 The Glasgow Herald, 8.9.62.
61 The LondonTimes, 9.9.62.
62 The Paisley Herald, 28.6.62.

> the right of the Southern States to secede from the Union was established when the Americans established their own right to separate from this country. It never has been, and never can be, pretended ... that a Government, founded on the broadest principle of human liberty, may conquer, and coerce, and hold in military subjection a people who detest that Government, and who have determined to be free and independent in their own way. Can there be any wonder that there is no growing feeling in this country in favour of the cause of the Federal Government?[63]

The Herald's position was strengthened following the announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation. The paper claimed that "such a proclamation issued now shows a mixture of weakness and wickedness . . . it is a most contemptible document and is calculated to deepen the conviction that the present crisis of affairs in America is far too grave and complicated to be properly dealt with by the existing Executive."[64] In the same edition, the paper also reported Gladstone's Newcastle speech and was determined that it would now also support Southern recognition. Why did such a low opinion of the Emancipation Proclamation exist amongst British Liberals? For a paper such as the Herald, which was a Southern sympathiser, the motive was clear: the Emancipation Proclamation had to be downplayed, in case it contributed to an increase in Northern support among Britons. Of course there was cynicism about the timing of the Proclamation, but this contributed mostly to abolitionist criticism of the Proclamation, which felt that the motive behind it was military rather than humanitarian.

Apart from its commentary on the P.P.R.A.'s activities, the Independent failed to make much comment on the American Civil War during 1862. The Saturday Post, the most radical of the Paisley papers, on the other hand, remained solidly pro-South during the year. In June, it suggested that "what the Confederates in America want at present is not recognition but military assistance. Whoever could afford them that would do their cause some benefit."[65] The Saturday Post also argued that the South's cause was a more important one. It described the North's cause as sentimental, whereas in the South:

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[63] The Paisley Herald, 12.7.62.

[64] The Paisley Herald, 11.10.62.

[65] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 28.6.62.

> the inhabitants are fighting for what, in their estimation, and in the estimation of all civilised communities, are real and important privileges - independence and the right of self-government. Fighting for the Union is but a vague and indeterminate battle cry; for it is quite possible and is believed by many that America may be equally or more prosperous and happy without the Union than with it; but a struggle for national independence has commanded the attachment and respect of men in all ages.[66]

In September 1862, the Saturday Post took the same line as the Herald, when it argued that most British support lay with the South. The paper attributed this support, firstly, to economic considerations, and blamed the Northern States for imposing the blockade of Southern ports, commenting that they "were under no compulsion to inflict such an amount of misery on neutral countries."[67] It also claimed that British support for the South originated in sympathy for its right to self-determination:

> we sympathise with the Confederates of the South because they exhibit the spectacle of a great and united people bent upon the acquisition of the dearest rights of man - the right of self-government and independence. We know no higher claim that any nation can possibly have to its individual existence than that it unanimously desires it and is disposed to make all manner of sacrifices for attaining and securing this inestimable privilege.[68]

The second year of the American Civil War led to a convergence of opinion amongst the Paisley newspapers, with the Herald and the Saturday Post, maintaining their positions in support of the South's quest for independence. The most interesting change was from the Renfrewshire Independent which dropped its support for the Northern States because of the North's equivocal stance on the slavery issue. Once the paper asserted that the North was not fighting for the abolition of slavery, it maintained that the struggle was based on territorial and commercial concerns. It went on to declare that the War was futile as the North could not conquer the South, and on this basis, began to support mediation and recognition in order to end the War. This change of heart is interesting,

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[66] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 16.8.62.

[67] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 20.9.62.

[68] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 20.9.62.

completing the Paisley newspapers' general hostility towards the North. Pro-North sentiments were strongest amongst the members of the P.P.R.A., although even here doubts arose towards the North, again on the issue of slavery and the South's claim of independence. Increasingly, Paisley was exhibiting the kind of splits which characterised Liberal opinion across Britain during the American Civil War. Even Paisley radicals such as the Glasgow Saturday Post and some P.P.R.A. members opposed the Northern States.

1863: Continuing Liberal Hostility towards the North

The third year of the War aroused most interest amongst the newspapers in Paisley. The Herald and the Saturday Post both remained in favour of the Confederacy, with the Herald beginning to question the merits of political reform in Britain, a stance which it claimed was influenced by the American Civil War. Although the Renfrewshire Independent alluded to a move towards Northern sympathy, it had returned to supporting Southern recognition by the end of the year. The most important development of the year was the implementation of the Emancipation Proclamation, which failed to boost Northern support amongst the newspapers. The Herald's move against reform in Britain as a result of the American Civil War was particularly interesting, however, as it again symbolised the important role which politics played in determining Civil War opinions in Paisley. It also supports the main contention of this thesis, that attitudes to political reform were instrumental in the formulation of Scottish Civil War opinions.

The Saturday Post described the Emancipation Proclamation as "a partial and unfair measure, giving liberty to the slaves of disloyal masters and retaining others in servitude."[69] The Post continued to argue that the best way to rid America of slavery

[69] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 7.1.63.

would be for the South to win its independence: "the South as an independent power would come at once under the influence of European Counsel. [Slavery] will as surely depart as a result of Southern independence and the world's action upon it as a taper will die in the sunlight."[70] Evidence suggests that the Saturday Post's stance was definitely rooted in principle, as we can see that its views were consistent throughout the nineteenth century. We saw, in the chapter on the Nullification Crisis, that the Post also stressed that separation was the way to bring about abolition in 1833.[71] The Renfrewshire Independent was also critical of the timing of the Proclamation, which it felt would have had a different impact, had it been issued at the beginning of the conflict. Instead, "reserved until brute force has failed to subjugate the slave states, the futile proclamation must be regarded as a vindictive and incendiary measure, serving hardly any other purpose than to mark the impotent wrath of its author."[72] Liberal opposition to the Emancipation Proclamation illustrated that while slavery had been the motivating factor of opinions during 1861, by 1863 it was clear that slavery was no longer the primary motive in determining Civil War opinion. Suspicion of the North's real feelings about abolition meant that observers were no longer willing to view the Civil War as a fight about slavery. Rather, support for Southern independence and Liberal suspicion of American democracy tended to figure most as determining factors.

The complexity of the issues which were raised during the American Civil War was illustrated in the reaction of the Renfrewshire Independent to a public meeting which took place in January 1863. Barely a fortnight after condemning the Emancipation Proclamation as "vindictive", the Independent changed its view on the role which the slavery issue played in the Civil War. The lecture entitled 'The Civil War and American Slavery', was delivered in the Free High Church, Paisley, on 28th January, by A.F.

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[70] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 7.1.63.

[71] The Glasgow Evening Post, 5.1.33: see Chapter 2.

[72] The Renfrewshire Independent, 17.1.63.

Stoddard of Thornhill House, in which the speaker spoke in favour of the North. This lecture led the Renfrewshire Independent to stress the importance of the slavery issue, describing how:

> it requires only that the people be convinced that the question is one of freedom *versus* slavery, to carry public opinion like an avalanche against the Confederate cause, and to sweep away all the false sentiment that has gathered in favour of the South, about chivalry, independence, hearths and homes, and such unadulterated bosh, and to exhibit slavery in all its hideous deformity and inhuman aspect to the detestation of every friend of humanity.[73]

This was a strong sentiment for the Independent to express, given its pro-Southern leanings in 1862, especially its refutation of the tenets of the much vaunted 'Southern way of life.' The Independent was not the most resolute of newspapers, however, and seemed to very much react to circumstances. This was exhibited when the paper swung back to Southern sympathy later in 1863. The Herald described how, at the close of Stoddard's speech, a number of the listeners arranged to hold further meetings to forward support for the North. On 30th January, the annual meeting with Humphrey Crum Ewing took place at the Moss St. Exchange Rooms. The Member for Paisley was more cautious in his opinions than he had been a year before when he had called for separation. Instead, he questioned the ability of the North to win, even though he would not sympathise with the South because of its defence of slavery:

> I do not see how it can be well doubted that slavery was the chief, if not the only, cause of the war ... in this view of the subject, we have no sympathy with the South ... there seems no prospect of the North being able to subdue the South, so as to retain it in the Union, for the South, as the defending party, must have the advantage.[74]

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[73] The Renfrewshire Independent, 31.1.63.

[74] The Paisley Herald, 31.1.63.

He concluded that if the South did succeed in its secession, international pressure would lead to the abolition of slavery, a commonly held view by opponents of the North.

On the 16th of February, a meeting took place in the United Presbyterian Church, organised at the previous meeting of 28th January. The meeting was held "for the purpose of expressing sympathy with the Government of the United States in the present struggle for the maintenance of the Union and the abolition of slavery."[75] The main participants at the meeting were those associated with the P.P.R.A., people such as Robert Cochran and William Colquhoun. Provost Campbell was in the chair. Reverend Hutton of Canal St. United Presbyterian Church was the first to speak, expressing his opinion that the South had no constitutional right to secede, and that the North was merely attempting to uphold the Union, echoing the opinions of the Duke of Argyll which we described earlier:

> a nation, whatever municipal or state sovereignty may exist within, must have a bond of union. This implies mutual fidelity to the central Government ... But what is more important still: I believe the South had no grievance to justify secession, much less bloody secession. Were they unrepresented? ... If not unrepresented, were they oppressed? How was that possible? All the disgraces of Federal legislation were concessions to their interest ... even from the first, the North was fighting on the better side. The Government was, as the articles of the Constitution provide, suppressing insurrection. 'Fighting for the Union,' we are told. True, and was not the Union a breakwater against slavery? Do them justice. Did not the Republicans believe at least that it was so? Before they could benefit the slave they must break the power of the slaveocracy.[76]

Reverend Hutton then proposed the first resolution:

> That the Southern States having, by their revolt against the Federal Government, kindled the flames of civil war without any cause to justify revolution, and having organised themselves into a Confederacy based on the denial of human rights to the coloured race, this meeting desires to express its abhorrence of a rebellion which thus violates the first principles of political justice, and seeks the perpetuity and extension of institutions framed in defiance of the moral sense of mankind and the dearest dictates of the Christian faith.[77]

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[75] The Paisley Herald, 21.2.63.

[76] The Paisley Herald, 21.2.63.

[77] The Paisley Herald, 21.2.63.

William Colquhoun seconded the motion. Dissent then arose in the meeting when a stranger, Mr John Campbell, wanted to speak but was denied permission. Given its support for democracy and representation, the P.P.R.A. was remarkably reluctant to accept voices of dissent. This demonstrates just how important the American Civil War, and in particular a Northern victory, was to the Paisley supporters of British democratic reform. This fact is demonstrated by d' A Jones, who described how much significance was placed by British radicals upon the Civil War:

> [John] Bright grasped the true meaning of the Civil War for British politics: the defeat of the Union and the dissolution of the United States, that real 'home of the working-man,' would set back the movement for parliamentary reform and the extension of the franchise in England. Victory for the Union and abolition of slavery ... would vindicate democracy and provide a telling argument for a new Reform Bill at home.[78]

The second resolution was proposed by Robert Cochran who praised the United States for proving that self-government was desirable, and was seconded by Bailie William Gillespie:

> That deprecating the policy of compromise with slavery, and presuming to urge the duty of aiming at its complete eradication from the political system of the States, this meeting rejoices to recognise in the election of President Lincoln and in the principal fruits of his administration - the abolition of slavery in the district of Columbia, its prohibition in the territories, the recognition of the Republics of Hayti [sic] and Liberia, the concession of the right of search for the suppression of the Slave Trade, the scheme of compensated emancipation, the proclamation which inaugurated the new year, as well as the act for substituting free for slave labour, adopted in the State of Missouri - successive triumphs of anti-slavery sentiment in the United States, and the prospect of accelerated liberation to the enslaved, and it desires to express cordial approval of all wise measures tending to promote the final abolition of slavery, and the assurance of heartfelt sympathy with the Government and people of the Union in their honourable struggle to prevent the establishment on their soil of that most portentous of despotisms, an irresponsible and retrograde slave power.[79]

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[78] d' A Jones, 'History of a Myth', p. 204.

[79] The Paisley Herald, 21.2.63.

More dissent arose when J. S. Mitchell rose to move an amendment to the resolution. He had also voiced his displeasure at the P.P.R.A. meeting of 15th July, 1862. Allowed to speak, he was eventually stopped by the meeting for talking too long, and went on to move his amendment:

> While this meeting sympathise with all men, seeking, by the aid of reason, the liberty of humanity of all countries and colours, we, at the same time, consider the struggle going on in America so doubtful as to its issues as to whether it will be backward or progressive in its character that, in the circumstances, we wait until there is more light upon the future of that great country before we can say Thou hast our sympathy for thy services to mankind.[80]

This amendment suggested that dissenters felt that the reunion of the American states could involve more restrictions on liberty than it prevented. Slavery might well be abolished, but a move 'backwards' was feared with regard to the right of people to govern themselves. Great confusion followed when Colin Black, who had supported Mitchell at the previous P.P.R.A. meeting, claimed that the North were the aggressors, and did not want to live alongside ex-slaves. Robert Cochran responded by accepting that Lincoln had previously supported Liberian colonisation but that:

> Lincoln was animated with a spirit of real philanthropy when he offered to convey any of the negroes who wished it to a climate better suited to their nature, and where they would enjoy political privileges equal to those of the Americans, and without being subjected to the prejudices of the whites.[81]

The Herald reported that the motion was "carried by a considerable majority."[82] A final resolution was proposed by Reverend W. Park of the Evangelical Union Chapel and seconded by John Brown of Thrushcraig:

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[80] The Paisley Herald, 21.2.63.
[81] The Paisley Herald, 21.2.63.
[82] The Paisley Herald, 21.2.63.

> That this meeting warmly appreciates the generous feeling which has prompted American citizens to dispatch supplies for the relief of the distress in Lancashire; and in common it believes with the great mass of the British people, highly values the friendship of the American nation, and the continuance of those amicable relations which it confidently trusts the license of an abusive press on either side of the Atlantic, shall entirely fail to disturb. Further, requests, the Chairman to transmit a copy of the above resolutions to his Excellency the American Minister.[83]

A second meeting was held in support of the North on 14th April 1863, at the Trades' Hall, Paisley, where James Sinclair spoke on 'The Southern Rebellion and British Sympathy.' The Herald reported that Mr Sinclair "held it as an indisputable fact that slavery, its extension, and perpetuation, was the end and aim, the origin and mainspring of this great conflict; and [it was] the paramount duty of the North to use all means to suppress the rebellion, and maintain the Union."[84] Councillor Moir also spoke in defence of the North, questioning the South's claim for independence:

> My sympathies, Mr Chairman, have all along been thoroughly with the North. I have been contending for the right of a majority to rule ever since I could open my mouth in public ... I cannot allow you to separate without expressing my opinion about the Southern rebellion. I regard these men as being the most wicked rebels that ever disgraced the face of this earth. Fighting for their independence! When were they independent? Were not they a portion of a Government, voluntarily entered into by themselves?[85]

This comment is important because it represented one of the few occasions when a pro-reform defender of the North specifically referred to majority-rule. Most Northern sympathisers paid more attention to the universal franchise and the secret ballot in America. The reluctance to dwell too heavily upon majority-rule may have been because the rights of minorities was such a popular cause during the 1860s, and had already led to significant levels of Liberal support for the South. On 2nd May, a public meeting was held

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83 The Paisley Herald, 21.2.63.

84 The Paisley Herald, 18.4.63.

85 The Paisley Herald, 18.4.63.

by "the friends of constitutional government and the freedom of the slave,"[86] in the Moss St. Exchange Rooms to hear George Thompson, the ex-M.P. and abolitionist activist and Dr. Massie of London speak on the subject of the American War. Dr Massie laid blame for the war with the South, and claimed that slavery was the sole cause of the War. Mr Thompson echoed these comments and claimed that anyone who was opposed to slavery could not oppose the North. Reverend Hutton then proposed the resolution, which was seconded by John Brown:

> That this meeting has learned with the highest satisfaction of the progress of the anti-slavery cause in America, and while expressing the deepest sympathy with the friends of freedom in that country would deprecate any attempts to render aid to the Confederate States, seeing they have been founded for the perpetration of slavery.[87]

These meetings illustrated the continuing interest which the Civil War provoked in Paisley, and in particular the extent of pro-Northern sentiments. It is interesting to note that the last two meetings were held independently of the P.P.R.A., indicating that pro-Northern feeling existed elsewhere in Paisley, although those attending the meeting were likely to be P.P.R.A. members. Later, in November, a meeting was held by the Paisley Branch of the Union and Emancipation Society of Manchester in the New St. Hall, Paisley. Peter Sinclair, the Secretary of the Manchester Society, was the guest speaker. He compared the American Republican party with the Corn Law League, in that it was composed of a number of political strands, but that they all agreed upon the subject of slavery.[88]

By the middle of 1863, the Renfrewshire Independent had again changed its position on the Civil War, and was once again a Southern sympathiser. In May, it stated that the North's fight was futile, and supported separation on the grounds that this

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86 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 2.5.63.
87 The Paisley Herald, 2.5.63.
88 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 14.11.63.

would be the best option for trade and slavery.[89] The argument put forward by George Thompson on 2nd May, that it was inconsistent for one to support the Confederacy and also abhor slavery was often challenged during the American Civil War. In July 1863, the Herald stressed that its support for the Confederacy did not originate in support for slavery, "but rather because other nations believe that it would be for the interests of freedom and peace that the gigantic power of America should be broken before it had become too formidable in its dimensions."[90] The paper claimed that the question of slavery was irrelevant to the debate: "we know that the people of this country sympathise with the Confederates altogether apart from anything connected with the question of slavery . . . we do not believe there is a more tyrannical and despicable government in the civilised world than the Federal Government."[91] It reiterated its doubts about the American political system in August:

> theoretically we have still very little fault to find with American republicanism, but practically it has been an immense failure. That all men are born free and equal, and that the great end of government is to secure the greatest happiness of the greatest number, are grand principles, but there are just as little of these principles to be seen in operation at present in America as in Russia, or any other European Kingdom [due to] the tyrannical and incompetent junto, which has usurped the exercise of absolute power in that country.[92]

The Herald's hostility towards slavery, and its opposition to extreme democratic reform was very similar to the views held by other moderate-liberals. Crook provided the example of W.R. Greg, a cotton manufacturer and moderate-liberal who "hated slavery, but saw the war as a price paid for America's unworkable populist institutions."[93] By this time, the Herald was connecting its doubts about the operation of democracy in America

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89 The Renfrewshire Independent, 23.5.63.
90 The Paisley Herald, 25.7.63.
91 The Paisley Herald, 10.10.63.
92 The Paisley Herald, 8.8.63.
93 Crook, The North, the South, p.196.

with the movement for reform in Britain. Rather than the British political system attempting to emulate the American example, the paper felt that it was more likely that America would choose to adopt a system akin to that in Britain:

> the example of the United States of America, and of some of our own colonies, were considered certain to lead soon to a better state of things, but, unfortunately for the realisation of such schemes of political advancement, there is more appearance at present of those hitherto in advance falling back to something like our position than of us making up to theirs.[94]

While the Herald was pondering the failures of democracy and republicanism, the Civil War was prompting the Saturday Post to question the operation of federalism. The paper suggested that in future more power should be lodged with the central government, away from the hands of the states, especially if the South gained its independence:

> These separate provinces, ... when they associated for the purpose of forming the United States of America, entertained great jealousy of one another, and retained, each of them in its own hands, many of those powers which ought to have been lodged in those of the central administration. Hence there has always been experienced a great difficulty in maintaining and conducting the foreign relations of the united Government; and hence, at the present hour, the States are distracted and torn between the claims of the central Power upon the individual States for support in the war with the South, and the desire of these separate states to carry out the ideas of independence to which they have been long accustomed. There can be little doubt that one result of the revolution that is going on in America will be to diminish the rights and prerogatives of the several states and to lodge greater power in the hands of the central executive; and the necessity for this will be altogether overwhelming, if, as is every way probable, the Southern States should succeed in gaining their independence.[95]

This is interesting, given the Saturday Post's support for the Confederacy, that it also supported centralisation of government in America to prevent the very secession which had created the Confederacy happening again in the future. The attempts of the

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94 The Paisley Herald, 29.8.63.

95 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 5.9.63.

Northern States to compel the Confederacy to return to the Union was further criticised by the Herald in October 1863, when the paper criticised the perceived inconsistency of Foreign Secretary, Lord Russell in expressing sympathy for the Italian nationalists but not for the Confederates:

> Poland likewise comes in for a fair share of his Lordship's sympathy, but he carefully abstains from saying one word which could be construed as inimical to the tyrannical policy of the Lincoln Government, or as favouring in the slightest degree those who are struggling so nobly in America for liberty and independence. Have not the Confederates shown that they have the capacity to govern themselves? ... And above all have they not fought as nobly for independence as any nation on the face of the earth? ... there is a monstrous inconsistency, therefore, in Earl Russell having no sympathy to bestow upon those who are so grandly resisting the most stupendous attempt which was ever made to force and rivet upon a nation a hated connection and a despised government.[96]

At the end of the year, the Saturday Post reaffirmed its position that the Confederates were fighting primarily for freedom, not slavery, stating that "naturally inclined to sympathise with a people who have risen with almost entire unanimity to sever themselves from a political connection that had become distasteful . . . we have all along looked upon the war in America as mainly a struggle for independence and freedom of action among the Confederated States."[97] The Post, however, recognised the Northern resolve which was beginning to strengthen:

> It is not easy for us perhaps to understand this enthusiasm in favour of the Union any more than it is easy to comprehend the unanimous desire that prevails in the South to be clear of the old connection for ever. We can only recognise its existence as a fact, and as a fact that will give the efforts of the North to bring the war to an auspicious termination a coherence and purpose for which we would not at one time allowed them credit.[98]

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[96] The Paisley Herald, 3.10.63.

[97] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 12.12.63.

[98] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 12.12.63.

On 8th December, 1863, when President Lincoln proposed to set up state legislatures in those seceded states where ten per cent of the population were pro-union, the Saturday Post was indignant: "no formerly-existing inequality could for a moment be compared with that destruction of the political balance which Mr Lincoln's scheme is calculated to produce."[99]

The Confederacy retained the support of the Paisley press during 1863, despite Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation at the beginning of the year, which probably strengthened, rather than weakened, resolve. The newspapers constantly reiterated that it was not inconsistent to support the South as well as the eradication of slavery. Their support for the South arose out of their belief in the right of a people to independence and self-government. Furthermore, abolition was deemed to be more likely if the South gained its independence than if the North reunited the Union. This view was also shared by Humphrey Crum Ewing, the M.P. for Paisley, as we have seen. The pro-North movement led by Robert Cochran still persisted in Paisley, however, and was motivated by its hatred of slavery, and in particular its belief that the North was fighting for democracy and majority rule, as well as for the freedom of the slave. The fact that the Emancipation Proclamation had arrived too late, as far as Britain was concerned, was reinforced by continuing doubt even from within the pro-North movement as to the real motives of the Northern Government. Some support was even voiced for recognition of the Confederacy, on the grounds that the North no longer exhibited any measure of freedom.[100] While Robert Cochran and his colleagues backed the North out of their support for democratic reform in Britain, however, the Paisley Herald was beginning to question the feasibility of further reform in Britain because of the American Civil War. Of greatest interest, we have seen that 1863 saw a great deal of comment upon the problems inherent in a powerful central state which could result in tyranny, according to opponents of the

[99] The Glasgow Saturday Post, 30.1.64.
[100] The Renfrewshire Independent, 1.8.63.

North. This tyranny was feared firstly from America's perspective, with criticism of the amount of power which the federal government was 'usurping,' but also from an international perspective, with fears of the growing size and influence of the United States in the world. More and more, we have seen the growing importance of political factors, such as these, in the formulation of Civil War opinions.

1864: The Importance of Democracy and Slavery

In the penultimate year of the War all three Paisley newspapers maintained their support for Southern independence, with the Herald, in particular, becoming more convinced that the American Civil War heralded the death knell for political reform in Britain. The paper argued that the War was caused by republican institutions and that the idea that popular institutions were a civilising influence had been refuted by the War. This is immensely significant because the Herald was a Liberal paper, not a Conservative one. A new paper was established in Paisley in October, 1864: the Paisley and Renfrewshire Gazette and Western Advertiser, a paper which appeared to lean further towards Northern support than the other papers. The year also saw the Renfrewshire Independent beginning to question its support for the Confederacy, out of concern about slavery. The main catalysts for this change were the Northern attempts to abolish slavery in the United States Constitution, and the killing of black Union soldiers by Confederates at Fort Pillow on 12th April.

On the 23rd of January, 1864, the Herald gave notice of a lecture on the 29th of January in the Paisley Exchange Rooms, delivered by Mr John Calvert on the subject of the American War. The Herald described Mr Calvert as being "well spoken of as a lecturer on this subject, . . . having resided both in the Southern and Northern States", so we can surmise that he was a British traveller returned from America. The Herald had been given a detailed synopsis of the lecture, which proved to be very pro-South, including

details of how the North had caused the War; that slavery would end as a result of disunion; and that ultimately, the South would triumph.[101] Slavery continued to be the main concern of the Independent which stated in January that, "the slavery party are not the natural allies of Britain."[102] Unlike the Herald, however, the paper was moving further towards supporting democratic reform in Britain, stating in early 1864 that it would "in future advocate a large extension of the franchise, even to the verge of Radicalism."[103] This support for the franchise did not translate into support for the North, however, whom the paper criticised for its illiberal actions:

> By a resolution of the Federal Congress, the establishment of a monarchy in Mexico is objected to on the ground that this form of Government is a menace to the republican form of Government prevailing upon the American continent, and an intrusion not to be tolerated. The Federals but repeat against imperial institutions in America the menaces of European despots against liberal institutions in Europe.[104]

The Herald, on the other hand, was moving further and further away from support for popular political institutions, as a result of the War:

> the wretched state of matters in America has done more to disgust the world with popular political institutions than anything which has occurred since the establishment of the United States republic ... the theory of republicanism being humanising, repressive of war, and fraught with steady human progress has been quite as falsified by recent events in that country as by the democratic horrors of the French revolution. [105]

The paper was especially scathing of those who were uncritical of the Northern States in general, and President Lincoln in particular: "Abraham Lincoln has in their eyes more

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101 The Paisley Herald, 23.1.64.
102 The Renfrewshire Independent, 2.1.64.
103 The Renfrewshire Independent, 5.3.64.
104 The Renfrewshire Independent, 23.4.64.
105 The Paisley Herald, 16.4.64.

than the divine right to govern wrong, than any anointed despot who ever reigned."[106] Again we see the Herald's concentration on the tyrannical aspects of American government. The paper described itself as a 'true liberal,' but claimed that the experience of the United States was leading liberals to fear the further extension of the franchise:

> as tyranny is not generally liked, although it emanates from the *vox populi*, and as true liberalism is opposed to despotism in every form, everything which is put forth on behalf of an extension of popular rights is regarded with suspicion and dislike as bringing us nearer to the condition of the United States, where tyranny and irresponsible power exist in the most objectionable, and obnoxious form.[107]

The Independent's position on the war continued to revolve around its thoughts on slavery and on the right of the South to govern itself. Its abhorrence of slavery did lead it to praise the American Senate for resolving to abolish the recognition of slavery in the United States Constitution, an act which the paper described as "the first genuine fruit of the American conflict," despite the fact that the Democrats later voted down the proposal in the House of Representatives on June 15th.[108] In April, the Independent also indicated that its sentiments were moving against the South, as a result of the Fort Pillow incident. The paper described the event as "the turning point in a conflict in which the whole civilised world will be banded against the supporters of slavery."[109] The Herald's response to the incident at Fort Pillow was very different to the Independent's, however:

> whatever the fault or the crime of the Confederates in refusing quarter to the negro soldiers the responsibility rests originally with the Federal Government who, baffled and humbled, made soldiers of them and armed them to conquer or kill those to whom, by the law of the United States, they belonged.[110]

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106 The Paisley Herald, 16.4.64.

107 The Paisley Herald, 16.4.64.

108 The Renfrewshire Independent, 23.4.64.

109 The Renfrewshire Independent, 30.4.64.

110 The Paisley Herald, 7.5.64.

This is a clear indication of the depths of the Herald's hostility to slavery. The paper was more willing to defend the view that slaves 'belonged' to their owners and that the Northern States had, in effect, stolen them, rather than criticise the Confederates for their action at Fort Pillow.

Suspicion of Northern motives prevented the Independent from converting its increasing dislike of the South into full support for the North. While the North had agreed to the abolition of slavery, the paper felt that this was because the North knew that abolition would weaken the South, not because it believed slavery to be wrong in principle.[111] In May, the paper isolated its hatred of the South's support for slavery, arguing that it believed the Southern States had a right to secede and that this was a separate issue from that of slavery: "the belief that the Southern States have the constitutional right to secede is perfectly compatible with the most intense abhorrence of the domestic institution."[112] In support of its belief in the constitutional right of the South to secede, the paper described what it saw as the absurdity of claiming that a constitution could be irrevocably binding. The Independent used the analogy of England and Scotland to make this point:

> it would ... be absurd for us *now* to frame a law which we could transmit to posterity, or to require that one constitution should be perpetual. Now, the union that subsists between England and Scotland is one in many respects more intimate than that subsisting in America, yet circumstances might arise that would render it justifiable in Scotland declaring it null and void. For example, all know that English representatives have an overwhelming majority in Parliament. In the event of their abusing this numerical strength by passing measures inconsistent with the conditions of the treaty of union, Scotland would be fully justified in once more declaring its independence. Suppose, for example, that our civil and religious liberties as a nation were interfered with, who can say that we should not be justified in at once apprising England of our determination to become, as of old, an independent nation?[113]

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111 The Renfrewshire Independent, 14.5.64.

112 The Renfrewshire Independent, 14.5.64.

113 The Renfrewshire Independent, 14.5.64.

This quote is interesting because it illustrates how the example of Scottish independence could also be used by Confederate supporters to defend their views. This was not a common occurrence, and even in this case, other reasons led to the Independent's support for the South, and Scotland's cause was merely evoked to bolster this support. In June, the Saturday Post laid blame for the war on the unsuitability of Northern politicians for their role. In apparent contradiction of its radical credentials the paper suggested that "gentlemen of Southern extraction were really the most fit for the duties of statesmanship . . . it would have been well for Mr Lincoln and his confidential advisors if they could have gone a little into official training before taking the burden of the Republic upon their Atlantean shoulders."[114] In September, the Saturday Post reiterated its feeling that the Northern politician was unsuited to his task, stating that "it is a remarkable and lamentable fact that there has never been so much done by any single man to discredit and damage Constitutional Government in America as by the President who was placed in power by the party styling itself Republican."[115] We will see how, after Lincoln's assassination, the Saturday Post's analysis of him was quite different. This echoes the contradictory sentiments voiced about Lincoln in Dumfriesshire before and after his death.

In June 1864, the Herald was convinced that the South had essentially achieved its independence, and that Britain should no longer withhold recognition.[116] It continued to express anti-Northern sentiments throughout 1864, criticising the pro-Northern 'minority' of the British public:

> [who] appear to think that it would be a pleasure and a privilege to see the Federal Government all powerful amongst the nations, ... these are only a narrow-minded and bigoted section of the people of this country, the great majority being equally opposed to the continuance and extension of the tyrannical principle of government by whatever name it may be called, or whatever form it may assume.[117]

114 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 25.6.64.

115 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 17.9.64.

116 The Paisley Herald, 4.6.64.

117 The Paisley Herald, 12.11.64.

This is further evidence of the use of the American Civil War to limit the movement towards democratic reform in Britain.

The Paisley and Renfrewshire Gazette and Western Advertiser was launched on 25th October 1864. From the outset, in its coverage of the American Civil War, it proclaimed that it would take no side in the War. In reporting the 1864 Presidential election, however, its sentiments appeared to be very pro-North:

> to all friends of liberal political institutions, it must be a great gratification that this election, where so many fierce passions were likely to be excited ... has passed off orderly, decorously, and in perfect peace ... This we are inclined to look upon as one of the best testimonies that could be paid to widely-extended political privileges.[118]

Little comment was made by the other newspapers on the election. Maybe this was because the election gave President Lincoln such a political and military boost, and indicated that the Northern people supported his war policy.

Above all, the American Civil War cut across traditional political positions, and this is clearly illustrated in our treatment of Paisley's reactions to the war. Newspapers which were considered Liberal, or even radical, were often strident in their support for the Confederacy, a section which exhibited a ruling aristocratic elite and an enslaved black population. These papers would, of course, have argued that they were not in support of these aspects of Southern society. The most interesting views were expressed by the Renfrewshire Independent which constantly grappled with the issues thrown up by the War. Its hatred of slavery and support for the abolitionist cause made outright support for the South difficult in the early stages of the War, and it managed throughout 1861 to support the North, despite much opposition from the other newspapers around it. The North's refusal to take up the abolitionist banner lost it much support in Britain, and made the task of its supporters much harder. By the beginning of 1862 the Independent had

118 The Paisley and Renfrewshire Gazette and Western Advertiser, 26.11.64.

given up, and began, instead, to represent the South's struggle for independence as just. By 1864, it was still having problems reconciling the South's support for slavery with its new found view; the incident at Fort Pillow, and its reaction to it, bearing witness to this. President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation had clearly come too late and had appeared to be too firmly based upon political expediency rather than true compassion.

1865: The Assassination of Lincoln and Paisley's Radical Heritage

Throughout the final year of the War the Herald and the Saturday Post maintained their position in support of the Confederacy, while the Independent began to revert to its 1861 position. The new paper, the Paisley Gazette, reaffirmed its pro-North sentiments as the War drew to an end. It appears that the Independent's change of heart may have been a reaction to events. By the end of 1864, the North's position was unassailable and some of the sentiments which the paper expressed in 1865 indicated that it very much wanted to be on the winning side.

At his annual meeting with his constituents, in early February, Crum Ewing accepted that the North's position was virtually unbeatable. He was pleased at the prospect of abolition, but was less sure that the maintenance of the Union was of great benefit:

> As to the maintenance of the Union, there may be room for difference of opinion, for if the abolition of slavery is secured, it may be asked of the Americans themselves whether the continuance of the present awful war is not too high a price to pay for the pride and glory of their restored Union.[119]

By now clearly aware that the North was heading for a sound victory, the Renfrewshire Independent changed its views and became a wholehearted supporter of the North. In its change of emphasis, the paper began to make interesting comment about what it regarded

[119] The Paisley Herald, 4.2.65.

as Paisley's historical position on liberal issues. It criticised Crum Ewing's speech, especially his belief that given the abolition of slavery, the North should relinquish its claim on the South:

> Mr Ewing asks the North to forego successes which have cost immense armies and incalculable treasure, now that the Southern slaveholders have been forced at the cannon's mouth to forego their claim upon human chattels. We should have expected that sympathy so illogical would have met with deserved censure in Paisley, but the old spirit which has made our town famous seems to be oozing out at the finger points of the present generation.[120]

The Independent's evocation of "the old spirit which has made our town famous" is interesting, and represents a significant tendency among commentators and politicians which persisted until the end of the nineteenth century. Macdonald stated that "Throughout the late nineteenth century, platform orators and the local Liberal press drew on Paisley's Radical and Chartist past as the origins of a local Radical identity and styled it as the property of the place."[121] She also discussed how this identity was often an "imagined" one, and which is crucial to our understanding of the use of Paisley's radical background.[122] The final year of the American Civil War illustrated this well, as we have seen from the Independent's comments. A newspaper which had supported the Confederacy for three years, the Independent was keen to stress its support for the old Paisley traditions once the North's victory was assured, and this was a tendency to which it would soon return. After this change of heart, the paper was even critical of those who had supported the South, without any reference to its own change of position. The Independent was now styling itself as the true Paisley 'Radical,' and criticised the new Paisley Gazette for its weak position on the subject of the American War:

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120 The Renfrewshire Independent, 4.2.65.

121 Macdonald, 'The Vanduaria of Ptolemy', p. 189.

122 Macdonald, 'The Vanduaria of Ptolemy', p. 188.

> instead of taking the lead as the 'liberal and independent' journal of the county, it has carefully hedged itself upon the most trying question of the day, and has left it to ourselves to speak out against the atrocious sympathy with niggerdom [Southern Slavery] shown upon this side of the Atlantic, in a voice befitting the present feeling and the past traditions of Radical Paisley.[123]

Again we see reference to "the past traditions of Radical Paisley," despite the views previously expressed by the Independent. Clearly, this shows how important this sense of a radical identity was to Paisley. One wonders whether reference to this past identity was under discussion in Paisley as a result of the American Civil War, especially when we identify the Independent's reference to "present feeling" in Paisley, in the above quote. In response to the Independent's criticism, the Gazette retorted that "as to America or any other question, the Gazette will at all times have the courage to have its own opinion, and will never hesitate to express it as it may see fit,"[124] although the paper did not take either side in the conflict until after the War.

The assassination of President Lincoln drew much attention both in Paisley and in the newspapers, with the Independent describing the assassination as "the most atrocious political outrage of modern times."[125] On 3rd May, a public meeting was held in the Evangelical Union Chapel, Paisley, to express sympathy with the American people following the assassination. The chairman, Provost David Campbell condemned the assassination, describing President Lincoln as:

> a great, good, and wise man, who has evinced in the most tempestuous times and in the most critical period of his country's history, profound sagacity, exalted patriotism, and a great capacity for government, and also in the hour of victory unexampled moderation, prudence, and clemency, united with an honest and unflinching determination to maintain the integrity of the great republic and utterly to destroy the nefarious and atrocious system of slavery, which has been its sin and curse.[126]

123 The Renfrewshire Independent, 25.2.65.

124 The Paisley Gazette, 4.3.65.

125 The Renfrewshire Independent, 29.4.65.

126 The Paisley Herald, 6.5.65.

Ex-Bailie William MacKean added that Lincoln "will stand out a bright star on the page of history, and posterity, equally with ourselves, will do him honour."[127] MacKean then moved the first resolution:

> That we express our indignation and deep regret at the base and cowardly assassination of Abraham Lincoln, President of the great American Republic, and the murderous attempt on the life of Secretary Seward, and that we also convey to Mrs Lincoln our heartfelt sympathy in her recent great affliction."[128]

William Aitken seconded the resolution. The second resolution was proposed by Reverend Brown of the United Presbyterian Church, St James Street, and seconded by Mr Hatchard:

> That we have long viewed with much satisfaction the ability and power manifested by the American Government in the course of this civil war, and we take the liberty to congratulate them that the recent great victories of the armies of the North give proof that peace will soon be restored to the country, that slavery will be abolished, and that free institutions will be established over the Union.[129]

Finally Mr Wilson moved that an address be sent to America, via the American Minister in London, and Mr Walker seconded this. The Independent commented that the meeting could have been better attended but was "satisfied to find that the occasion has drawn out many lukewarm friends of the cause of emancipation, who ought to have taken an earlier opportunity of showing their admiration of President Lincoln and their desire to appreciate the noble work of abolishing slavery his life has been so ruthlessly sacrificed to."[130] Some of the duplicity which resulted in Lincoln's epitaphs being more flattering than depictions of him whilst alive, was equalled only by the Independent's hypocrisy.

The Saturday Post recognised the gap which Lincoln's assassination would leave in the period of reconstruction, stating that:

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127 The Paisley Herald, 6.5.65.
128 The Paisley Herald, 6.5.65.
129 The Paisley Herald, 6.5.65.
130 The Renfrewshire Independent, 6.5.65.

> Mr Lincoln has been taken off when he could be worst spared. Notwithstanding some peculiarities of character, he was gaining in the estimation of his country and the world. There was an honesty and uprightness about the man that amply atoned for the absence of more brilliant and attractive qualifications. He was undoubtedly the means of preserving peace with this country when less discreet officials, if left to themselves, would have precipitated a quarrel. Above all, he was needed at the present hour when there are some prospects of the return of peace in America.[131]

The Herald and the Saturday Post remained largely silent to a great extent following the War, and neglected to raise and discuss the implications of the Northern victory. The Independent, on the other hand, seemed to forget the position it had taken between 1862 and 1864 when it had wholeheartedly supported the Southern right to secede and stated that "there is not . . . a shred of argument to support the Southern revolt, and it is but fitting that those who inspired it for the most foul purpose should now suffer for the guilt of all the desolation that has been caused."[132] The paper also returned to its theme of resurrecting Paisley's radical past, condemning the whole town for not supporting the North enough:

> the contemptible silence Paisley has observed during the whole course of the American conflict goes far to blot out the recollection of the public and liberal spirit our town once had a reputation for; but the present emergency offers an opportunity for asserting our sympathy with the triumph of emancipation on the American continent, and the admiration we had for the honest old man whose life has been so ruthlessly sacrificed in the struggle.[133]

Again, we notice the recurrence of this theme which lends more support to Macdonald's argument that Paisley's radical identity was as much a historical invention as it was a reality, used by political activists to bolster their views.[134] It is interesting to note that supporters of the Confederacy did not evoke Paisley's radical past to support their views.

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131 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 29.4.65.

132 The Renfrewshire Independent, 29.4.65.

133 The Renfrewshire Independent, 29.4.65.

134 Macdonald, 'Locality, Tradition and Language', pp. 55-6.

Even the Independent felt that Paisley's radical identity fitted more comfortably with the Northern victory in 1865.

The Independent went on to speak as though it had always supported the North, and had endured the wrath of contemporaries for doing so. The fact that for the most part of the War, the Independent had supported Southern independence appeared to have been forgotten, as it claimed that:

> in exposing and denouncing the abominable spirit shown by a portion of our press and our commercial public, we have had but little sympathy or encouragement extended to us ... we must confess to have used language upon the American question only warranted by the strength of our convictions and the solitary place we occupied.[135]

The paper then criticised those who had supported the South as its fortunes grew:

> While the cause of the South seemed to prosper - at least in the eyes of the shallow blockheads who were either too ignorant to follow the military measures of the North, or were incapable of comprehending the real elements of the question, there was no pause to the screeching of the Southern partisans. [136]

The Independent went on to relate the Civil War to the cause for political reform in Britain, and argued that those who supported the South were the same people who opposed reform at home. By saying this, the paper again forgot its own position, whereby it had supported the enfranchisement of the working classes, but had also supported the Confederate's claim for independence. It suggested that:

> Those who truly understand the obstacles to the political enfranchisement and social elevation of the people, know that it is not to our genuine aristocracy, but to the sham gentility of our cities [that] working men owe much of their existing degradation, and it was neither remarkable nor unexpected that the huckstering class [137] should show a warm sympathy with the revolt of their nigger driving brethren across the Atlantic.[138]

135 The Renfrewshire Independent, 6.5.65.

136 The Renfrewshire Independent, 20.5.65.

137 huckstering class: derogatory term to describe the merchant and manufacturing classes.

138 The Renfrewshire Independent, 20.5.65.

Highlighting its refusal to adopt a position during the Civil War, the newly established Gazette condemned those who had criticised it, and maintained that it had felt compelled to bide its time, "and refrain, in the excited fever of the public mind from the expression of their opinions, unless, forsooth, prepared to be treated with scorn by the abounding sympathisers of Southern 'separatists.'"[139] The Gazette argued that the North had been fighting for political principle, "to see that the great question of democracy should not remain undefended at their hands."[140] The paper then went on to praise the North for its struggle to maintain the Union, and trusted that reconstruction would not be a bitter affair. As a result of the War, the Gazette argued, America would be a better country:

> No patriot ever consents willingly to the dismemberment of his country, and the North would have displayed but a poor inheritance of the spirit of the Revolution, had they allowed the great confederation of states then inaugurated, to have, by the selfishness and ambition of Southern adventurers, been rent in twain ... If, as we trust, the spirit of the North be one of forbearance and kindly sympathy for those who may have been misled, the bitter feelings engendered by the war will soon be forgotten; and, with the curse of slavery removed, they will doubtless become welded together into a nation greater and grander than before.[141]

The Gazette later suggested that the Southern States had not been fighting for freedom in its truest sense. The paper argued that it was as a united entity that "North and South enjoyed as great an amount of freedom . . . as ever they could expect or hope for in a state of separation. Every state was protected in its own domestic laws and institutions, and the freedom it desired within its own boundaries lay in its own hands."[142] The particular type of freedom that the Southern States had wanted was "the freedom to retain their sable brothers in bondage, and to spread that bondage into the yet unpeopled territories of their country, . . . the despotism at which they aimed was one worse than Russian in

139 The Paisley Gazette, 22.5.65.
140 The Paisley Gazette, 22.5.65.
141 The Paisley Gazette, 22.5.65.
142 The Paisley Gazette, 29.5.65.

character."[143] The paper went on, however, to call for clemency with regard to the treatment of Jefferson Davis, as did the Saturday Post, which, alluding to its support for the South throughout the conflict, argued that because the bonds of the American federation were quite loose, Jefferson Davis' crime had not been that severe.[144]

Conclusion

Liberal opinion in Paisley represented a microcosm of Great Britain as a whole, with Liberals supporting both the Confederates and the Northern States. This phenomenon supports one of the contentions of this thesis: that there was no clear-cut distinction between Conservative and Liberal support during the American Civil War. The Glasgow Saturday Post and Paisley and Renfrewshire Reformer, a radical paper, and the Paisley Herald and Renfrewshire Advertiser, a Liberal paper, both supported the Confederacy throughout the Civil War. The Renfrewshire Independent and Paisley Weekly Journal, also a Liberal paper, verging on radicalism, swung in its support between the Northern and Southern States. This was representative of Liberal opinion throughout Britain, with some Liberals supporting the Confederacy in its quest for independence, and others supporting the North because of the slavery issue and the belief that the North was fighting for democracy and freedom. When we look at what made some liberal newspapers support the North, and others the South, we have seen that there were three main factors at play: support for the South's claim for independence; the slavery issue; and the debate over democratic issues. The effect which the American Civil War had upon the Paisley economy did not influence Civil War attitudes discernibly. There was a small amount of attention paid to the general trade benefits which Britain would gain if the Confederacy was a separate nation, but this was in the very early stages of the War, before the Cotton Famine had taken hold. The effect of the Northern blockade of

143 The Paisley Gazette, 29.5.65.

144 The Paisley Gazette, 20.5.65; the Glasgow Saturday Post, 3.6.65.

Southern ports upon Paisley's cotton industry did not seem to influence opinion either way. Individuals such as Robert Cochran were vociferous in their descriptions of the poverty in Paisley, as we saw in the previous chapter, but their support for the North originated in their political views, rather than as a result of economic factors. Instead of pointing to the War as the cause of the distress in Paisley, radicals tended to blame the British authorities for their reluctance to provide aid to the town.

The majority of Liberal support for the Confederacy was ostensibly linked to sympathy for its drive for independence. This proved to be the case in Paisley, where both the Paisley Herald and the Glasgow Saturday Post based their support for the South on its claim for self-government. In 1864, the Renfrewshire Independent also claimed that its new support for the South was because of its belief in the South's right to be independent. The origin of this support was two-fold: firstly, there was concern that the Federal Government was oppressive towards the South; and secondly, there was a culture of support for independence struggles during the 1860s. The first concern arose out of what was seen as the North imposing its will and its interests upon the Southern States. A prime example of this was the tariff issue, an object of concern in America since the Nullification Controversy of 1832. This attitude also contributed to the opinion that the North was not giving the South the respect it deserved during the Civil War. The Glasgow Saturday Post, for example, criticised the North for not taking the South's secession seriously enough.[145] Most significant of all, though, was the prevailing mood of the time, when minorities in Europe were fighting for their independence, in Italy, Poland, and Hungary, for example. Such a mood undoubtedly made British sympathy for the Confederacy much more likely.

The slavery issue was a second factor in the formulation of opinions on the Civil War, although it was used by both sides to reinforce their points. At the outset of the

145 The Glasgow Saturday Post, 20.9.62.

War, the Renfrewshire Independent had supported the North because it saw the South as only wishing to uphold slavery, and declared that the slavery issue was of more importance than the effect of the war on the British economy. When the North refused to ally itself with the abolitionist cause, the Independent turned against the North, however. While the paper began to support the South's fight for independence, it remained solidly opposed to the perpetuation of slavery. It did, however, begin to support the line taken by the Saturday Post and the Herald, that slavery stood a better chance of being abolished as a result of separation than it did if reunion took place. These two papers argued that it was not inconsistent to support the Confederates in their fight for independence and also call for the abolition of slavery.

The third factor to influence the newspapers' response to the American Civil War was their attitude towards democracy and republicanism. What we must be aware of, of course, is the tendency of the papers to talk of republicanism and democracy as though they were the same thing. To differentiate between the two, the newspapers spoke of democracy as a system of government based on the equality of man and the pursuit of the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Republicanism, on the other hand, describes a system where the people are governed by elected representatives, and headed by a president, rather than by a hereditary head of state. As we have seen, the Renfrewshire Independent declared in 1861 that republicanism was not on trial, and that it was the American system of confederation that hung in the balance. This view was also reiterated during the Trent Affair when the paper attributed the peaceful resolution of the problem to the republican system. By the end of the War, at which time the Independent had returned to its Northern support, it proclaimed the end of slavery, rather than the boost which had been given to democratic politics. Generally, the Independent was not overtly influenced by democratic issues, being led instead by its abhorrence of slavery, or perhaps its desire to be on the 'winning side.'

The Herald's attitude to American democracy was more complicated, as was its reaction to the democratic issues which the War threw up. In the 1850s, the Herald had supported the ballot, praising its operation in America, and proposing its implementation in Britain.[146] Throughout the 1850s, however, it expressed its opposition to American republicanism, which it equated with popular tyranny. While the occurrence of lynch law was not necessarily the fault of republicanism, the Herald argued, it believed there to be a close connection between the two.[147] Meanwhile, in 1856, the paper stated that republicanism had been a good system in the early days of American independence, but that by the mid-nineteenth century it had severely deteriorated.[148] In 1862, the Herald attributed the Civil War to the fact that republican systems lacked the flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances, and it declared that "it never has been, and never can be, pretended that a republican government has some divine right to rule and tax a people, not only without their consent, but in entire opposition to their will."[149] By 1864, the Herald declared that "the theory of republicanism being humanising, repressive of war, and fraught with steady human progress has been quite as falsified by recent events in [America] as by the democratic horrors of the French revolution."[150] We can therefore see how the Herald's opposition to the North was motivated by its dislike of American republicanism. The Herald's change of mind on the subject of political reform was the most important effect which the American Civil War had on the paper's views, however. It had supported the ballot throughout the 1850s, but had turned against further democratic reform by the mid-1860s. The Glasgow Saturday Post went even further than the Herald in its support for American democracy in the 1840s.[151] Like the Independent,

146 For example, see the Paisley Herald, 17.6.54.
147 The Paisley Herald, 29.7.54.
148 The Paisley Herald, 2.2.56.
149 The Paisley Herald, 12.7.62.
150 The Paisley Herald, 16.4.64.
151 For example, see the Glasgow Saturday Post, 14.8.41, 4.1.45.

however, the Saturday Post did not raise the issue of democracy during the war. Its support for the South arose out of its support for Southern self-government.

The attitude of the working classes of Paisley towards the American Civil War is difficult to determine. There is little evidence available to explain their feelings about the conflict, although we have seen that the unemployed of the town did not make any reference to the War during the period of greatest deprivation. It is to be concluded, therefore, that a certain amount of apathy seemed to exist amongst the working classes of Paisley with regard to the Civil War, although in fairness, this was fairly typical of the experience of other British towns, as Wright described with respect to Bradford. He argued that "Working men who demonstrated for the North were usually those involved in the reform movement,"[152] an assertion which also applies to Paisley, where we witnessed the activities of the Paisley Parliamentary Reform Association, and its working class membership.

This chapter illustrates that there were a number of factors which influenced the Paisley newspapers' reaction to the American Civil War, but that political principle was much more important than materialism. The Renfrewshire Independent's views were moulded by its opposition to slavery, although one suspects that there was a tendency for the Independent to hedge its support, depending upon which side in the conflict it felt was heading for victory. This is an obvious reaction by any newspaper, past or present, and was a phenomenon to which Van Auken also pointed.[153] The Herald held more complicated views, but its anti-Northern stance appeared to emanate from its doubts about American republicanism before the Civil War: the War merely confirming its doubts, and it henceforth supported separation. Democratic issues were very much at the fore of the Herald's thinking in the war, especially when the War led the paper to question the

152 Wright, 'Bradford and the Civil War', p. 84.

153 Van Auken, S. 'English Sympathy for the Southern Confederacy: The Glittering Illusion', Unpublished B.Litt., Oxford, 1957, pp. iv-v. Quoted in Hernon, 'British Sympathies', p. 358.

feasibility of further democratic reform in Britain. The radical Glasgow Saturday Post supported the Confederacy throughout: its views mostly originated from its belief in the right of the South to independence. The opinions expressed by the P.P.R.A. also demonstrated the ways in which the issues involved in the war affected the stances of Liberals. The majority of the members of the P.P.R.A. were led by their support for universal democratic rights to support the North in the Civil War, in a similar way to which many of the P.P.R.A.'s members had supported the Hungarian nationalists in 1849.[154] They believed that America offered to its citizens the equal rights of man, compared to Britain which exercised political slavery. The United States was also seen as the home of freedom, and majority rule, and provided proof that the people were able to govern themselves. Dissent within the Association arose over the issue of slavery and the right of the South to win its independence. On the issue of slavery, dissenters argued that slavery was more likely to be eradicated if separation did take place, and that the North showed no inclination to free the slaves, nor to live alongside them. On the issue of independence, they argued that the South had every right to secede, because of the oppression it often suffered at the hands of the federal government. The factors which influenced the reaction of the press in Paisley, and the movements which supported the North, were commonplace throughout Scotland and Great Britain as a whole. These factors go some way to explaining what at first glance appears to be a contradiction between liberal politics and support for a slave-owning Confederacy.

154 The Renfrewshire Advertiser, 25.8.49.

Chapter 10: The Scottish Borders and the American Civil War

Chapter 10: The Scottish Borders and the American Civil War

This chapter will examine the experience of the Scottish Borders during the American Civil War, an experience which is important to us for three reasons: firstly, the region was home to a thriving woollen manufacturing industry which enjoyed great prosperity as a result of the American Civil War. Consequently, it is crucial that we examine the precise nature of this effect, as it will contribute to the knowledge which we already possess about the economic effects of the American Civil War in Scotland. Secondly, given this information about the Borders' economic experience of the Civil War, we need to examine the reaction of commentators in the region towards the War, to provide further evidence about the links between economic prosperity and Civil War attitudes. This chapter will allude to Wright's work on the Civil War experience of the Yorkshire woollen towns of Bradford and Leeds, where he argued economic conditions were not a determinant of Civil War attitudes.[1] It will be shown that the situation in the Borders was very similar. Little work exists on the subject of the Borders and the American Civil War, as the main examination of the impact of the War on the British woollen industry concentrated on the trade in Yorkshire, and barely any reference was made to the War in local studies of the principal Border towns.[2] Thirdly, this chapter will provide a useful contrast to our study of the effect of the Civil War on Paisley. Both regions were home to strong manufacturing interests and a distinctive radical identity, although they experienced different economic effects as a result of the American Civil War. The contrast between Paisley's economic downturn and the Borders' prosperity will provide further explanation about the influence which different economic effects had upon Civil War attitudes, especially as we have seen that economics played little role in the formulation of Paisley Civil War attitudes.

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[1] Wright, 'Bradford and the Civil War', p. 81; 'Leeds and the Civil War', p. 97.

[2] Greeves, 'Civil War'; Edgar, Hawick in the Early Sixties; Hall, R. The History of Galashiels. Galashiels, 1898; an exception is Galashiels History Committee. Galashiels - A Modern History, p. 57, which makes a brief allusion to the War.

Before examining in detail the effect of the American Civil War on Border woollen towns, it is necessary to approach the issue of sources. The problems inherent in the available trade statistics are well known, with difficulties arising as a result of changing methods of collection and classification between 1861 and 1862 in the Annual Statements of Trade.[3] For example, in 1861, 'Woollen and Worsted Manufacturers Cloths of all Kinds' were classified collectively; while in 1862, they were classified separately into 'Broad Cloths: Plain, all wool', 'Narrow Cloths: Plain, all wool', 'Broad Cloths: Coatings/Duffels all wool', and so on. A second problem arises due to the change in unit descriptions. In 1861, blankets were calculated by the yard, while in 1862, they were calculated according to number. One therefore has to rely on the value of exports in pounds sterling, with the inflationary difficulties that this entails. While these statistics have been used, this study will also rely upon more qualitative evidence, such as the trade reports published in the Border Advertiser of Galashiels, a moderately liberal paper owned by William Brockie and edited by James Brown, and the Hawick Advertiser and Roxburghshire Gazette, a liberal paper owned by James Haining, with Thomas Cathrae as editor. These trade reports concentrated not only on Galashiels and Hawick, but also on Selkirk and Innerleithen. An additional source of useful information in the local newspapers were the reports of local meetings held by manufacturers, especially the New Year soirees held by local manufacturers for their workers. These meetings often expressed valuable comment on trade conditions and external factors affecting that trade.

The aims of this study are as follows: firstly, to explain the progress of the woollen trade in the Borders in the years 1861-65; secondly, to ascertain the impact which the American Civil War had on this trade, as well as the impact of other factors, such as the European market. These assessments will allow us to examine the opinions expressed

[3] Greeves, 'Civil War', p. 6; Jenkins, D.T. & Ponting, K.G. The British Wool Textile Industry, 1770-1914, Aldershot, 1987, p. 222; Gulvin, Clifford, The Tweedmakers: A History of the Scottish Fancy Woollen Industry, 1600-1914, Newton Abbot, 1973, p. 95.

in the Borders towns on the subject of the American Civil War, and to discuss the relationship between economic conditions and political opinions.

The Borders Woollen Industry, 1861-65

Three important woollen-manufacturing centres existed in Scotland in the mid-nineteenth century: the Borders region; the Hillfoots district, north of the Firth of Forth; and Aberdeen. Of these areas, the Borders region was the most important, with Galashiels the centre of the trade. Woollen manufacturing also took place at Hawick, Selkirk, Peebles, Innerleithen and Walkerburn in the Tweed Valley, Jedburgh in the eastern Borders, and to a smaller degree at Dumfries and Langholm, over the border in Dumfriesshire. The American Civil War had an almost immediate effect upon the Borders woollen industry, as local producers began to express their fears about the possible impact of the War on their American export trade, and the consequent effect which this would have on prices. Whereas the previous month's New Year festivities indicated that the South of Scotland woollen trade in 1860 had been in a buoyant state, by February 1861, concerns were already evident about the effect of the War on the local trade.[4] For the rest of 1861, the trade in the Borders continued to be dull, and the American Civil War was overwhelmingly blamed for the slump, both by newspapers, and during local meetings of manufacturers.[5] The Trent affair at the end of the year further depressed local trade, but with the settlement of the dispute, more confidence was felt in the market, and by the spring of 1862, there was a general consensus that trade was beginning to improve.[6] By the autumn of 1862, trade was very buoyant, and local commentators were grateful that the region was prospering at a time when the cotton manufacturing districts were in such a dire state. This prosperity was attributed to the fact that the region did not rely upon America

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[4] The Eskdale Advertiser, 2.1.61; Hawick Advertiser and Roxburghshire Gazette, 2.2.61.
[5] The Border Advertiser, 17.5.61, 21.6.61, 18.10.61; the Hawick Advertiser, 1.6.61, 8.6.61.
[6] The Hawick Advertiser, 1.2.62, 1.3.62.

for its raw material.[7] There were also clear indications that the woollen trade was benefiting from an increased export trade in woollens to the American market, however. At the Manufacturers' Dinner in October 1862, a London merchant, J.S. Ness argued that the Borders did not benefit from the 1860 Anglo-French Treaty of Commerce, which admitted British manufactures into France at reduced tariffs, and instead attributed Galashiels' prosperity to its American export market: "It was rather a wonderful thing, in the face of the present state of things, that America took a very large quantity of goods from Galashiels, while in France, where the greatest results had been expected, there was no demand for Scotch tweeds at all."[8] Initially the British and French industries had been evenly matched. Following the introduction of British competition as a result of the 1860 Treaty, however, the French industry began to improve its machinery and production methods, which resulted in lower prices and improved quality. The result of the Treaty, from the French woollen industry's point of view at least, was the strengthening of France's industrial position. The British woollen industry, on the other hand, found that initially its exports to France increased, but by 1863 exports had fallen back again.[9] This reinforces the argument that it was the American Civil War which was the cause of the Borders prosperity.

Trade continued to prosper in the early months of 1863, and in March, the Border Advertiser described how Hawick manufacturers were planning to take part in blockade-running activities to get their goods to America: "They say that some of our enterprising firms have hit upon a plan which, if carried out, will rid their shelves of a few dusty parcels (perhaps to great advantage), if 'Brother Jonathan's' iron-clads keep out of sight."[10] By the summer of 1863, trade continued to grow as a consequence of the high price

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7 The Hawick Advertiser, 27.9.62.

8 The Border Advertiser, 17.10.62.

9 For more information on the 1860 Treaty, see Dunham, A.L. The Anglo-French Treaty of Commerce of 1860 and the Progress of the Industrial Revolution in France. Michigan, 1930.

10 The Border Advertiser, 6.3.63; Greeves, 'Civil War', p. 210.

of cotton,[11] and prospered well into the autumn, with a meeting of the South of Scotland Chamber of Commerce on 21st September 1863, again dispelling the idea that the French Treaty was the reason for the current prosperity. The meeting discussed the prospects of a commercial treaty with Italy, to which Mr Stewart, the secretary, stated that "there was no direct trade between this district and Italy, [although] there was a large consumption of tweeds and hosiery in that country."[12] Discussing the effects of the French Treaty on the local woollen trade, Mr Stewart stated that "the woollen trade with France had fallen off considerably, and that the present duty of 15 per cent. is almost prohibitive." Mr Walter Laing, vice-President, responded that:

> the Board of Trade returns showed that only one-third of the woollens exported to France in 1862 had been sent in the same period of 1863. In the first seven months of 1862 the exports of woollen cloth to France amounted to £437,000, and in the same period of 1863 they only amounted to £145,000.[13]

This attitude had earlier been voiced by Adam Cochrane, the Deacon of the Clothiers' Corporation in Galashiels, who commented in 1862 that "the French treaty had not realised the expectations formed of it so far as the trade of Galashiels was concerned, the goods being of too high a quality to suit the continental trade."[14] This is further illustration of the insignificance of the European market for Scottish woollens, and reinforces the need to look elsewhere for an explanation of the Borders' prosperity. Later in this chapter we will see how insignificant the European market, and the French market in particular, were to the Borders manufacturers.

One result of the prosperity of the woollen trade, and something which also helped to maintain the prosperity, was the extension of mill property and the installation

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11 The Border Advertiser, 19.6.63.
12 The Hawick Advertiser, 26.9.63.
13 The Hawick Advertiser, 26.9.63.
14 Hall, History of Galashiels, p. 362.

of modern machinery. On 3rd October 1863, the Hawick Advertiser reprinted a report on Galashiels trade from the Scotsman which described how:

> the quantity of new and improved machinery that has of late been brought into use, and the enlargement of old or building of new factories ... testify to the remarkable activity and prosperity with which the woollen manufactories here at present favoured; and we believe the prospects are equally encouraging for the winter.[15]

The extent to which the tweed trade was prospering at this time is also illustrated by the fact that Galashiels and Selkirk firms were beginning to turn away orders in October 1863.[16] Further evidence that the Civil War was at the root of this prosperity was shown at the end of the year, when there were indications that Hawick manufacturers were benefiting from the American demand for Scottish woollens, with the Border Advertiser describing how in Hawick, "a considerable quantity of cloths are being made for the American market, and this added to the home demand, has created the more than ordinary necessity for keeping the machinery constantly on the move."[17]

1863 represented the first complete year of prosperity in the Borders during the Civil War, with the Border Advertiser stating that "we are sure we do not overstate the amount of business done throughout the past year when we say it has been fully a third above that of any previous year."[18] At the Soiree and Ball of Messrs C. Wilson and Sons in Innerleithen, Mr John Smail, the foreman and chair, commented that 1863 had been:

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[15] The Hawick Advertiser, 3.10.63; further illustration can be found in a lecture delivered to the Social Science Congress, in 1863, entitled 'The Scotch Tweed Trade' by Adam Cochrane, in the Hawick Advertiser, 17.10.63, and a report in the Hawick Advertiser, 31.10.63.

[16] The Hawick Advertiser, 31.10.63, 7.11.63.

[17] The Border Advertiser, 4.12.63.

[18] The Border Advertiser, 1.1.64.

> a year marked by great prosperity both in the tweed and blanket trade. You all remember the gloomy forebodings that were amongst us as to the evil effects the American war was likely to have on our trade. But how agreeably have we all been mistaken. Instead of dull trade we have had a year of the greatest prosperity. This I attribute chiefly to the energy and enterprise of our manufacturers, whose exertions have been equal to the emergency of the case. It is truly astonishing how they have found so many outlets for their goods.[19]

This attitude was also described by Greeves, who stated that fears about the potential effects of the American War led woollen manufacturers to find new avenues of trade in the domestic market.[20] As we have seen, the American Civil War did not cause the devastation which was feared by the woollen trade. Instead, some American demand held up, and the effect which the War had upon the British cotton industry led to prosperity in the woollen trade. The rest of the prosperity was caused, not by the French Treaty, but as a result of an exploited domestic trade.

Trade continued to prosper throughout the spring of 1864, with a shortage of labour being the only problem faced by manufacturers.[21] The Hawick Advertiser printed an excerpt from George Harrison & Co.'s Circular which described the previous year as "by far the most prosperous season which the tweed trade has ever had, the quantity of goods made having been at least 15 per cent. greater than in any previous season."[22] As the winter approached, trade continued to prosper, and was again attributed to the Cotton Famine: "Galashiels has had an unprecedented run of good trade for some time back. The short supply of cotton has given an impetus to the lighter branches of the woollen trade, wool having been substituted for cotton in many articles of wearing apparel."[23] The end of 1864 saw uncertainty arising in the Borders woollen trade, however, with a fear that

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19 The Border Advertiser, 8.1.64.
20 Greeves, 'Civil War', p. 186.
21 The Border Advertiser, 15.4.64.
22 The Hawick Advertiser, 19.3.64.
23 The Hawick Advertiser, 8.10.64.

overtime levels would have to be reduced.[24] The Circular of Messrs Bradbury & Cook described how "the uncertainty as to the result of the Presidential election, and the rapid decline in the price of cotton"[25] were partly to blame for the stagnation. This illustrated how fears were arising over the possibility of the Democratic candidate, George McClellan, winning the election. As the Democratic platform was based on a quick end to the War, this was clearly seen as bad for the British woollen trade. During the winter and spring months of 1865, trade in tweeds began to slow down, with orders falling in Galashiels and Hawick, and unemployment growing in Jedburgh,[26] serving to confirm such earlier fears as to the prospects for the woollen trade if the American war ended.

The Extent to which the Civil War caused the Prosperity in the Borders Woollen Industry

There is wide acceptance that the American Civil War had a favourable impact upon the British woollen industry, although disagreement has arisen over the specific influences of the War.[27] Watts, in a contemporary account of the effect of the War on the woollen trade, argued that the dearth of cotton led to a substitution of woollen goods: "the trouble of Lancashire has been the opportunity of Yorkshire . . . whilst one-half of the machinery of Lancashire was for three years idle, every spindle and every loom in Yorkshire was increasingly busy."[28] Greeves provided the most comprehensive examination of the effect of the Civil War on the British woollen trade, arguing that the increase in demand for woollen goods in 1862 was a result both of speculation and the need to replenish stocks of cotton.[29] He also illustrated how the benefits of substitution, and

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24 The Hawick Advertiser, 17.12.64; the Border Advertiser, 9.12.64.
25 The Hawick Advertiser, 24.12.64.
26 The Border Advertiser, 10.2.65, 24.2.65, 7.7.65; the Hawick Advertiser, 18.2.65, 25.3.65, 1.7.65.
27 Jenkins & Ponting British Wool, pp. 157-62; Greeves, 'Civil War.'
28 Watts, Cotton Famine, p. 393.
29 Greeves, 'Civil War', p. 156.

the increased demand for uniforms from America was offset by negative factors, including the falling price of wool in 1863, the high price of cotton warps, and the American tariffs.[30]

There is also general agreement that the Civil War period saw prosperity in the Scottish Borders woollen industry. Greeves described how the Borders tweed industry was strengthened during the American Civil War, at the expense of the West of England woollen trade.[31] Botsford attributed the prosperity to the heavy mechanisation and larger units in the Borders which enabled the region "to survive the Morrill tariff, the inflated price of raw materials, and the initial disorganisation of the American market, and was able to meet subsequent American demands arising out of the war situation."[32] Gulvin, in his examination of the Borders Tweed industry, underestimated the influence of the War on the region, however, arguing that: "a reduction in sales to the United States, which market was particularly important to some tweed centres, notably Galashiels, was unlikely to be covered by an increased demand for Scottish high-quality woollens at home as cotton prices rose."[33] Gulvin did go on to acknowledge that "nonetheless Border firms clearly experienced considerable growth in sales in the 1860s,"[34] attributing this growth to "rising demand at home through growing incomes, and with the conclusion of free-trade treaties with France and other European countries."[35]

It is the contention of this thesis that the Scottish tweed districts did experience growth as a direct result of the American Civil War, partly through the substitution of woollen goods for cotton goods, but mainly as a result of changing fashions heralded by the war, which led to greater demand for tweeds; and because the Borders was able to

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30 Greeves, 'Civil War', p. 157.

31 Greeves, 'Civil War', p. 420.

32 Botsford, 'Civil War', vol.1, p. 449. [Botsford called for further research into the effect of the war on the individual woollen towns of the Borders to reinforce this argument.]

33 Gulvin, The Tweedmakers, p. 95.

34 Gulvin, The Tweedmakers, p. 95.

35 Gulvin, The Tweedmakers, p. 95.

maintain its American market despite the blockade. We have seen that contemporary Borders commentators minimised the importance of the French Treaty of 1860, which opened up the French market for British manufactures, and argued that it did not lead to a great increase in trade from the Borders to the Continent. Instead, local commentators attributed the prosperity of the Border towns to the war on the other side of the Atlantic. The following section will provide further evidence that the European market was not of great importance to Borders manufacturers.

The Direction of British Woollen Exports

In order to argue that the American Civil War was responsible for the prosperity of the Borders in the 1860s, it is essential that we examine the nature of the export market for British woollens, in order to gauge the relative importance of the American and European markets. It is particularly important that we examine the importance of the French market, given that the 1860 Anglo-French Treaty has been credited by some as a major cause of the prosperity of the 1860s. The main sources for this discussion are the Statements of Trade, which provide data on the destination of British exports. While useful in their breakdown of individual exports, their changing methods of classification and data collection mean that analysis is at times difficult. It is especially difficult to ascertain the precise direction of Scottish woollen exports, because they are not described separately in the statistics, but we can, however, assess the direction of those narrow cloths and hosiery products which were particularly associated with the Scottish Borders.

The most significant result which has arisen from this analysis is the clear importance of America as Britain's main export market for woollen manufactures. This is illustrated by the following table for 1860:

	% of British exports going to				
	USA	Germany	France	China	Canada
Woollen & Worsted Cloths	22	2	1	8	7
Napped Coatings & Duffels	60	-	-	-	-
Blankets	67	0.4	0.2	0.2	5
Shawls	60	3	1.5	-	1
Hosiery	31	5	2	-	7

Table 10.1: The proportion of British woollen exports going to America, 1860. (Figures derived from Parliamentary Reports Vol. 726A: Annual Statement of Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom. General Exports 1860, pp. 223-9.)

These figures clearly show that America was Britain's most significant woollen export market in 1860, especially for coatings, blankets and shawls, with America taking the majority of woollen manufactures. For woollen cloths and hosiery, however, America was still the largest single market for these British manufactures. As the Civil War developed, British woollen exports to America fell, both numerically and as a percentage of total woollen exports. The following table shows the extent of this fall. It adapts the coatings figures, and uses the cash values of exports in order to arrive at a consistent comparison of each year's figures:

British Woollen Exports to America, 1860-4 (£'000s, percentages in brackets)					
	1860	1861	1862	1863	1864
Blankets	336 (57)	404 (55)	394 (47)	219 (28)	293 (36)
Shawls	124 (60)	34 (27)	62 (29)	70 (26)	57 (26)
Hosiery	54 (31)	12 (8)	6 (9)	8 (7)	14 (14)
Coatings	4 (70)	5 (59)	14 (24)	9 (6)	2 (8)

Table 10.2: The value and proportion of British woollen exports going to America, 1860-64. (Figures derived from Parliamentary Reports Vol.726A, 768, 769, 785, 805: Annual Statements of Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom. General Exports 1860-64.)

The American market did, however, maintain its position as the most important single market for a number of woollen manufactures throughout the War. Particularly significant exports were broadcloths, blankets, and shawls, and by 1864, America provided the largest export market for narrow cloths as well (20 per cent of total narrow cloth exports).[36] This latter category is particularly important, as it encompassed Scottish tweeds, and was a market which expanded during the American Civil War. In 1862, America received seven per cent of British narrow cloth exports, a figure which grew to twenty per cent in 1864.[37]

While America, both united and divided, represented the most important export market for British woollen manufacturers, a number of other export destinations also merit comment. British North America became a growing market for narrow cloths, receiving over 70 per cent of British coatings and duffels in 1864.[38] Australia was the principal market for hosiery goods, receiving between 34 and 42 per cent of exports between 1861 and 1864,[39] and the Far East (comprising China, India, Singapore and Ceylon) was also an important market for a variety of woollen goods, especially narrow cloths, of which it absorbed over twenty per cent between 1862 and 1864.[40]

The Anglo-French Treaty of 1860 came as a result of a period of tension between the two countries. Gladstone believed that a trade treaty would bring the two nations closer together, and Richard Cobden, the radical free-trader, was sent to France to negotiate with Michel Chevalier, for the French government. The Treaty opened up the British market to French textile manufactures, wine, and brandy, and opened up the French market

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36 Annual Statement of Trade 1864. (Parliamentary Reports Vol. 805, p. 192.)

37 Annual Statements of Trade, 1861 - 1864. (Parliamentary Reports, Vol. 768, pp. 218-24; Vol. 769, pp. 179-84; Vol. 785, pp. 178-83; Vol. 805, pp.191-96.)

38 Annual Statement of Trade 1864. (Parliamentary Reports Vol. 805, p. 195.)

39 Annual Statements of Trade 1861 - 1864. (Parliamentary Reports, Vol. 768, p. 223; Vol. 769, p. 184; Vol. 785, p. 183; Vol. 805, p. 196.)

40 Annual Statements of Trade 1862 - 1864. (Parliamentary Reports, Vol 769, p. 180; Vol. 785, p. 179; Vol. 805, p. 192.)

to British textile manufactures, coal, steel and machinery.[41] Because of the importance of the 1860 Anglo-French Treaty and its repercussions on the woollen trade, it is essential that we examine the size of the European, and particularly French, trade with Great Britain. If we class the European market as those exports sent to France, Hamburg and Denmark, it is clear that compared with British trade to Colonial possessions and to America, the European trade was not of great significance. In the entire Civil War period, exports of woollens to Europe never exceeded 15 per cent of the total. The following table illustrates the size of the French market for British woollen manufacturers:

	% of Exports going to France				
	1860	1861	1862	1863	1864
Woollen & Worsted Cloth	1.2	5	0.7*	2.7*	2*
Blankets	0.6	0.1	0.4	-	-
Shawls	1.4	7.2	2.8	2.1	1
Hosiery	1.8	8.4	-	1.2	-

Table 10.3: Proportion of British woollen exports going to France, 1860-64. (Figures derived from Parliamentary Reports Vol. 726A: Annual Statement of Trade 1860, pp. 223-9; Vol. 768: 1861, pp. 218-24; Vol. 769: 1862, pp. 179-84; Vol. 785: 1863, pp. 178-83; Vol. 805: 1864, pp. 191-6.) *These figures are recalculations because of changed classifications.

We can see that while the 1860 Treaty served to increase exports in 1861, the proportion of woollen exports going to France remained very small, and fell back further in subsequent years. This concurs with the previous comments of Walter Laing of the Borders in 1863. The reason for this fall in exports was that the French woollen industry was able to withstand British competition, and indeed, was strengthened as a result of the Treaty.[42] It has been demonstrated, therefore, that the French market was not of great importance to Borders woollen manufacturers, either before or after the 1860 Treaty. Clearly, then, the reasons for the Borders prosperity must relate to the American and domestic markets.

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41 See Dunham, The Anglo-French Treaty, pp. 215-16.

42 See Dunham, The Anglo-French Treaty, pp. 234-5.

Conclusion: The Effect of the American Civil War on the Borders Woollen Trade

Having determined that the French Treaty of Commerce was not an important factor in the prosperity of the Borders in the 1860s, it can be concluded that the American Civil War had a major impact on the Scottish Borders woollen industry, creating previously unseen prosperity in the woollen towns. Despite uncertainty created by the American troubles in 1860 and 1861, the Trent affair in 1861, and the Northern defeat at Fredericksburg in 1863, the woollen trade in the Borders moved on an upward trend throughout the Civil War period. The benefits which the War provided for the trade can be brought under two main headings: the effect of the War on the domestic market for woollens, and the effect of the War on woollen exports to the American market.

In the context of the British woollen industry as a whole, the Civil War led to a substitution of woollen goods for cotton goods, as cotton became scarce. Coarser wools and shoddy (a cheap cloth made from the shredded fibres of old woollen cloth) tended to be used as substitutes, however, and as the Borders region specialised in higher-quality woollens and tweeds the area did not benefit directly from this substitution. It was widely reported in the local press, however, that local manufacturers were actively pursuing alternative avenues of demand, and it is possible to link this activity to the impact of the American Civil War, as a direct result of fears about falling export markets in the United States. The acknowledgement that falling exports were a probability led woollen manufacturers to take a greater interest in the British domestic market, a phenomenon which Greeves described as a "chief influence of the Civil War."[43] A feature of this interest was the creation of a new fashion of fancy woollens and tweeds which began to be preferred by consumers over broadcloth. Such a change in fashion benefited the Borders woollen industry, specialising as it did in quality-woollens and tweeds.

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[43] Greeves, 'Civil War', p. 186.

We have already pointed out that fears about a contraction of the export trade to America were widely expressed by local commentators at the beginning of the American Civil War, and indeed led to a depression in trade at that time. Despite this fear, however, it has been demonstrated that some manufacturers still managed to export goods to both Northern and Southern States. The American tariffs of 1861, 1862 and 1864, which raised the average rate of duty from 20 per cent to 47 per cent, in order to protect home industries such as woollen manufacturing, hit the woollen trade severely in Britain,[44] but Jenkins and Ponting have pointed out that manufacturers of high quality goods could still maintain their American trade, due to such goods having a high price inelasticity.[45] Scottish tweeds fell into this category, being of high quality, and therefore the type of product that consumers would demand, regardless of price. This therefore provides some explanation for the ability of Galashiels to maintain its exports to America. Statistics describing Scottish tweed exports are difficult to come by, a problem exacerbated by the tendency of manufacturers to send goods abroad via Glasgow merchant houses,[46] but it is still possible to see how important America was as an export market for tweed producers. This was particularly the case in Galashiels, where 75 per cent of its trade was with America during the nineteenth century.[47] Given that the Continent was not a strong export market for the Borders; that a substitution effect for cotton did not especially affect the region; and the fact that towns such as Galashiels did not have much of a home trade, the ability of Border towns to maintain their American export trade is an important explanation for the region's prosperity.[48] It would be impossible and foolhardy to claim that the American Civil War was the only factor which led to the prosperity of the Borders woollen industry in the 1860s. Rising income levels in Britain and changing

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[44] Jenkins & Ponting, British Wool, p. 156.
[45] Jenkins & Ponting, British Wool, p. 156.
[46] Gulvin, The Tweedmakers, p. 123.
[47] Gulvin, The Tweedmakers, p. 123.
[48] Galashiels - A Modern History, p. 56.

fashions provide evidence for the likely prosperity of the woollen trade regardless of the American Civil War. Nevertheless, the impetus which the Cotton Famine provided for the woollen industry was immense, and the negative effects of the war on American demand for British woollen products led manufacturers to exert more energy in stimulating the domestic markets, as well as maintaining the American export market.

Attitudes Towards the American Civil War in the Scottish Borders

Following our analysis of the effect of the American Civil War upon the Scottish Borders woollen industry, it is now essential to examine the reaction of commentators in Hawick and Galashiels towards the Civil War. The majority of studies which have examined the extent of the economic influence upon Civil War attitudes have concentrated upon Lancashire, although Wright provided a valuable insight into attitudes in the Yorkshire woollen towns of Bradford and Leeds.[49] It is essential that we examine how commentators in towns which benefited from the Civil War regarded the American events, in order to ascertain whether prosperous conditions influenced attitudes. This examination of the Borders woollen industry will show that the people of towns such as Hawick and Galashiels predominantly supported the North. Although Ellison would attribute this sympathy to the region's booming status, it will be demonstrated that the reactions of Hawick and Galashiels were remarkably similar to those of Bradford and Leeds, in that political attitudes were much more important determinants of Civil War opinion than were economic factors. In all these towns it will be shown that a radical tradition persisted which moulded views upon the American Civil War.

The Liberal Tradition in the Borders

Throughout the nineteenth century, Hawick was home to a radical tradition which was manifested through the co-operative movement, anti-Corn Law agitation, and the campaign for political reform. In this respect, we can see comparisons between Hawick and Paisley, in terms of a shared radical outlook. One of the earliest demonstrations of liberalism in Hawick was the anti-slavery movement of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, with petitions sent to Parliament from the town, and American

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[49] Ellison, Support for Secession; Augar, 'The Cotton Famine'; Wright, 'Bradford and the Civil War'; Wright, 'Leeds and the Civil War'.

Quaker meetings held in Hawick Town Hall.[50] In the 1830s, the agitation for the 1832 Reform Act was established in Hawick, a town which had already expressed animosity towards the few in the town who could vote.[51] Robert Wilson, a Liberal publisher of political pamphlets, organised the reform movement in Hawick in the 1820s and 1830s, and as a result, Simpson described how "the people of Hawick had no doubt about the scale of the triumph of 1832. Hawick, in common with other radical centres, celebrated with an imposing jubilee."[52] The deficiencies of the 1832 Reform Act meant that elections still led to controversy in Hawick, however, most especially in 1837 when the 'Tully's Mill' incident occurred, where a Tory farmer was almost drowned in Slitrig Water by a radical mob,[53] and in 1842, when the townspeople burned an effigy of Sir Robert Peel.[54] The late 1830s also saw the formation of a Chartist Association in Hawick, which established a Co-operative store, partly "as a sort of reprisal on some of the more wealthy shopkeepers because of the opposition they had displayed towards the [Chartist] movement. At that time the merchant class were largely Whigs."[55] Edgar also described how the anti-Corn Law movement found support in Hawick, where "many public meetings were held in advocacy of the cause . . . a meeting under the auspices of the League was held at Jedburgh on Saturday, 20th January, 1844, and was attended by nearly a thousand of the Hawick Reformers."[56] It is particularly significant to note that when John Bright visited Scotland as part of his anti-Corn Law campaign in 1843, Robbins described how it was at Hawick that his comments were so bold as to cause him to later retract them: "Bright's

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50 Duffill, M.B. 'Further Light on the Life of Thomas Jenkins.' Transactions of the Hawick Archaeological Society (hereafter THAS) (1994), 34-50, p. 39, p. 44.

51 Peacock, W.T. 'The Early Stockingmakers and their Industry.' THAS (1960), 23-35, p.35.

52 Simpson, E.J. 'Robert Wilson - A Hawick Reformer.' THAS (1966), 27-32, p. 32.

53 Mackay, H.K. 'Directories and Other Yellowing Pages: Hawick and the Borders.' THAS (1979), 39-47, p. 40.

54 Goodfellow, J.C. 'The Early Days of John C. Goodfellow.' THAS (1997), 28-33, p. 33.

55 Edgar, J. 'Hawick and Its People in the Victorian Period, 1837-1901.' THAS (1940), 10-52, p. 11.

56 Edgar, J. 'Hawick and Its People', p. 16.

language on this tour had on occasion been loose. He had to write to a friend urging him to persuade the editor of a Kelso paper 'to suppress that portion of my speech at Hawick in which I declared "that if any law ever justified revolt the Corn Law was that law. . ."' "[57]

This brief description of radicalism in Hawick confirms the existence of a consistent liberal tradition in the town during the early nineteenth century. It is also important to recognise that the 1860s, in particular, is regarded as an extremely important decade in Hawick's history. McBean Hart described how "the 1860's, the mid-point of the great Victorian period, are in many respects the most interesting ten years in the story of Hawick in the 19th century."[58] The most important issue in Hawick at the beginning of the decade was municipal reform. Until the introduction of the 1861 Police Act, the town council was known as the "Eternal Council" and was largely self-appointed. A local manufacturer, Thomas Laidlaw, spoke for many in the town when he suggested that it was "high time the last vestige of feudalism should be swept away in respect to the management of the affairs of the Burgh."[59] From 1861, Hawick had its first elected council, voted in by the 365 eligible voters in the town.[60] In addition, the 1860s witnessed the building of the Hawick-Carlisle railway which greatly benefited the industry of the town, at a time when the introduction of steam power was causing the decline of the stocking trade.[61]

Galashiels, while not being quite so radical as Hawick, was nevertheless home to a strong liberal movement during the mid-nineteenth century. On the question of reform, the 1832 General Election resulted in local reformers attacking the Tory candidate, Thomas Bruce of Langlee, and smashing his carriage to pieces.[62] The town was also home

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[57] Robbins, John Bright, p. 40.

[58] McBean Hart, H. 'Mid-Victorian Hawick: A Look Back to the 1860's.' THAS (1960), 5-14, p. 5.

[59] Edgar, Hawick in the Early Sixties, p. 33.

[60] McBean Hart, H. 'Mid-Victorian Hawick', p. 6.

[61] McBean Hart, H. 'Mid-Victorian Hawick', pp. 8-9.

[62] Hall, Galashiels, p. 112.

to a branch of the Chartist Association in the 1840s, and following the passage of the 1868 Reform Bill, Hall described how:

> the Town's Band paraded the streets in honour of the event, and all through the town the greatest enthusiasm prevailed. ... The long denied voice in national affairs had at length been achieved, and no time was lost in making preparations for the choice of a representative.[63]

It is also interesting to note, perhaps in connection with the issue of political reform, that in 1833, mass emigration to America and Australia took place from Galashiels. Hall commented that the reason for this is unknown, as the town was very prosperous at this time, but it may be possible that emigration became a preferred option for those reformers who felt let down by the Reform Act of 1832.[64] Support for the Italian and Hungarian nationalist causes was also evident in Galashiels. In 1856, Hall described how the town was visited by Lajos Kossuth, the Hungarian nationalist, who spoke to a crowded meeting, and in 1862, an Italian speaker, Signora Mario also lectured in Galashiels on the subject of Italian freedom and unity.[65] This support for European nationalism will prove crucial to our understanding of Northern support in Hawick and Galashiels during the American Civil War.

Hawick and Galashiels therefore provide us with an excellent case study upon which to examine Scottish Liberal attitudes towards the American Civil War. The towns were both liberal-radical in their outlook; Hawick had recently experienced reform of its local council along more democratic lines; and the Borders' woollen industry was at a crossroads between the old days of the handloom, and the new experience of steam mechanisation and railway communications. The towns were therefore very receptive to the economic experiences and political ideas which the American Civil War aroused.

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63 Hall, Galashiels, p. 544.

64 Hall, Galashiels, pp. 116-7.

65 Hall, Galashiels, pp. 128-9, p. 578.

The Borders' Reaction to the American Civil War

1861-1862: Depression in the Borders

We have seen how the woollen trade in the Borders suffered as a result of uncertainty created by the Civil War, from its outbreak until Spring 1862. There was consequently widespread support for a quick resolution to the conflict, whether that was the North allowing the South to go free, or the South returning to the Union. At this stage, neutrality was the preferred option of commentators, because of the dangers to trade that any other policy would have.[66] No support existed for recognition or mediation in the region, apart from one editorial in the Border Advertiser in February 1862, which stated that "the Southern States are large and wealthy enough to form an independent kingdom ... ; and the question cannot but arise in the minds of thinking men, whether it would not be better for Europe as a united kingdom to recognise it as a separate state."[67] This statement was a reaction to the Northern blockade of Southern ports which was blamed for the flatness in the Borders woollen trade. The dull trade was clearly leading some to believe that a quick Southern victory would be the quickest way to improve trade prospects. This is one indication of economic circumstances affecting political opinion, although a quick resolution was the primary desire, rather than sympathy for one side or the other.

Opinion was not strongly pro-South in the Borders, but the North's refusal to acknowledge that the war was being fought against slavery meant that feelings became anti-North by the spring of 1862. Support for a speedy termination of the War, with the South gaining its independence, was supported mainly on the grounds that the North's fight was futile and should be ended as quickly as possible. We can see then, that the Borders' reaction differed little from that expressed in Dumfriesshire and Paisley. The South was not wholeheartedly supported, but because of suspicion about Northern motives

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66 See a speech by Sir William Scott, Liberal MP for Roxburghshire, to the South of Scotland Chamber of Commerce: The Hawick Advertiser, 28.9.61.

67 The Border Advertiser, 21.2.62.

and military ability, a Southern victory was envisaged as the quickest way to bring about an end to the War. Later in the War, attitudes about democratic reform would grow as motives for Civil War opinions, but at this stage, a quick victory was hoped for, on political and humanitarian grounds, as well as economic ones.

1862-1863: Boom in the Borders Woollen Trade

From the Summer of 1862 until the end of 1863, the Borders enjoyed high prosperity in the woollen trade, largely as a result of the American Civil War. Support for neutrality remained, an indication that there was no desire for an internationally mediated conclusion to the War, and that there was more support for the North than the South. There was also less support for recognition than there had been in the early stages of the War, with only the Hawick Advertiser hinting at support, calling recognition "a step which would have been justified by numerous precedents in past history".[68] The option of mediation was rejected by the Border Advertiser in 1862 and 1863, and while the Hawick Advertiser called upon President Lincoln to accept foreign intervention because of reports that Northern soldiers were apathetic towards their cause in August 1862, the paper argued against such a policy in November 1862.[69]

The Emancipation Proclamation of January 1863 did not alter Border newspaper opinion on the issue of slavery and the War, with both papers questioning the effectiveness of the Proclamation in practice.[70] The real importance of the Proclamation in the Borders, however, was the incentive which it provided for Northern sympathisers in Hawick and Galashiels to organise themselves.[71] Pole described the importance of the Emancipation Proclamation in producing this effect across Britain:

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[68] The Hawick Advertiser, 3.1.63.
[69] The Hawick Advertiser, 2.8.62, 22.11.62.
[70] The Border Advertiser, 16.1.63; the Hawick Advertiser, 17.1.63.
[71] The Hawick Advertiser, 14.2.63.

> The Emancipation Proclamation alone, ... was the decisive weapon that friends of the North in Britain needed to let in the stemmed tide of Northern sympathy. ... The first three months of the new year saw a truly extraordinary spate of working class activity, the product of an enthusiasm, a directing intelligence and a unity of purpose.[72]

The first pro-North meeting was held in Galashiels on 5th February 1863, in the Corn Exchange, and a large crowd was present.[73] The chairman, Mr Frater, a local merchant, described how slavery was the undoubted cause of the war and argued that the North was fighting "for the unity of every country, for the dignity of human nature, and for the destruction of chattel slavery." It is interesting to note a rare mention of the issue of national unity. It is telling that, while democracy and slavery were commonly referred to at such meetings, national unity was less common as a talking point. This assertion was met with cheers and some opposition from the meeting, indicating as in Paisley, a measure of dissension. Reverend A. Brown proposed the first resolution:

> That this meeting, recognising the common brotherhood of mankind, and the sacred and unalienable right of every human being to personal freedom and equal protection, records its detestation of negro slavery in America, and of the attempts of the rebellious Southern slaveholders to organise on the great American Continent a nation having slavery as its basis.

The resolution was seconded by Mr William Sanderson, bookseller, who described how the Southern States were opposed to freedom and free trade. Amid much confusion, Mr James Wilson of Huddersfield proposed an amendment: "that this meeting, while recognising the equality of man without regard to colour, regrets that the Southern Confederacy has not yet had time to abolish the system of slavery, but hopes that the war will ultimately lead to that end."[74] Mr Alexander McDonald seconded the amendment. On a vote being

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72 Pole, Lincoln and the Working Classes, pp. 22-23.

73 The Border Advertiser, 6.2.63.

74 Greeves, 'Civil War', p. 159, describes how Huddersfield's woollen yarn industry grew in the Civil War period to supply the demands of Scottish tweed manufacturers, so it is possible that Mr Wilson was connected in some way to this business.

taken, twenty-one voted for the amendment, "while a perfect forest of hands were held up in favour of the resolution, which was carried amid enthusiastic applause." The second resolution of the meeting was proposed by Mr Alexander Thomson and seconded by Mr Goodfellow, and expressed sympathy with President Lincoln's Government, and support for the Emancipation Proclamation. James Wilson again tabled an amendment, supporting the South's right to secede and denouncing emancipation as an act of desperation. Mr Thomas Fairgrieve, merchant, seconded the amendment. On the vote, thirty-six voted for the amendment, "and an overwhelming majority in favour of the motion." Confusion and uproar broke out after the vote, following the chairman's comment that "After that, I think the Southern advocates may fairly give it up," a comment he was forced to withdraw. This meeting illustrated that, while there was clearly a strong pro-Northern group in Galashiels, there was also a sizeable pro-Southern element, although the lack of precise figures offered in the newspaper account of the meeting meant that the size of the pro-Southern group is unknown. The Border Advertiser was critical of the Northern slant of the meeting, claiming that the Northern supporters gave insufficient reasons for their stance. In addition, the paper criticised the organisers for framing resolutions which made opposition to them difficult, and expressed satisfaction that half of the meeting had abstained from voting.[75]

George Thompson, the well known radical and abolitionist, spoke in Hawick on 20th April, 1863, following exertion in the town to receive a speaker who would advocate the Northern cause.[76] This is significant in itself, as Ellison claimed that most of the pro-North meetings in Lancashire were imposed and organised from outside the area.[77] The experience of Hawick weakens this argument and illustrates that pro-Northern feeling was genuine rather than manufactured. In anticipation of the meeting, a vast number of

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[75] The Border Advertiser, 13.2.63.

[76] The Hawick Advertiser, 14.2.63 and 28.3.63.

[77] Ellison, Support for Secession, p. 59 and p. 93.

pamphlets were distributed in the town, with posters depicting the horrors of slavery. A significantly large crowd of 700 people gathered at the Free Church to hear him speak. He declared that the War was caused by Southern opposition to free Northern institutions, and the Southern desire to extend slavery. He urged those at the meeting to support Lincoln's Republican party, and the Hawick Advertiser described how "Mr Thompson was frequently applauded during the delivery of his address, which occupied about two hours, and he resumed his seat amid loud cheers."[78] Thompson also spoke at the first United Presbyterian Church in Galashiels on 22nd April, although the Reverend John Lawson, in the chair, "regretted that there was not a larger audience."[79] He also spoke at Galashiels Corn Exchange on 24th April, "to a rather thin audience."[80] It appears, therefore, that as Augar described with respect to Lancashire, in the Borders the Emancipation Proclamation served to confirm previously-held opinions rather than alter them.[81] The newspapers' anti-Northern sentiments were reinforced by what they saw as the insincerity of the measure. Pro-Northern individuals in Galashiels and Hawick, on the other hand, were given the impetus by the Proclamation to organise an active pro-Northern movement. The effect which the Emancipation Proclamation had in the Borders had strong parallels with its effect in Leeds. Wright described how "emancipation of the slaves in January 1863 marked a watershed in attitudes to the Civil War. . . . Liberal enthusiasm for the North after emancipation was combined with a revival of the Leeds abolitionist tradition."[82] While some in the Borders remained resolutely against the North, the proclamation unearthed a strong pro-North movement, which resulted in a flurry of meetings, which was also seen in Leeds.[83]

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78 The Hawick Advertiser, 25.4.63.
79 The Border Advertiser, 24.4.63.
80 The Border Advertiser, 1.5.63.
81 Augar, 'Cotton Famine', pp. 315-16.
82 Wright, 'Leeds and the Civil War', p. 118.
83 Wright, 'Leeds and the Civil War', pp. 118-20.

The problems which we need to be aware of when examining press reports of public meetings mainly centre upon the newspapers' opinions and whether they concur with the opinions being expressed at the meeting. Firstly, the question of attendance is problematic: most reports do not mention specific figures and we consequently have to rely upon descriptions of room capacity and whether filled. Secondly, we have to accept the version of speeches given to us by the press, and cannot be certain whether omissions have been made. Thirdly, some newspaper accounts of meetings include heckling and applause, thereby indicating the level of support for the speaker, while some accounts do not. Clearly, if a newspaper agreed with the opinions expressed at a particular meeting, it was more likely to be vague or exaggerate the attendance of the meeting; and it would have maximised the reported applause and cheering, and minimised, or omitted altogether, dissension. The opposite could also be true for newspapers reporting meetings they disagreed with. On the other hand, a newspaper could not stray too far from the general mood of the meeting, given the witnesses in attendance at the meeting who may also have read the newspaper report. The most sensible approach is to be aware of such problems, but recognise that newspaper reports of meetings are as accurate an account of meetings that are available to us.[84] It is, of course, possible to compare accounts of the same meeting in different newspapers. In the Borders, however, the newspapers seemed to use the same reporter at meetings and then differed in their presentation of the meeting in their pages.

It appears, if these reports are to be believed, that there was more support for the North in Hawick than in Galashiels. The strength of feeling in Hawick in favour of the North is interesting. The town was also home to both a "Friends of Italy" group and a "Friends of Poland" group, neither of which appeared to exist in Galashiels.[85] This illustrated a liberal dominance in Hawick which, while leading to support for the

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84 For more discussion on the problems inherent in using newspaper reports of public meetings, see Augar, 'Cotton Famine', pp. 238-40.

85 The Border Advertiser, 29.11.61, 17.4.63.

independence movements in Italy and Poland, did not result in support for the Southern Confederacy. Hawick's support for the North was the result of a liberalism which was manifested through support for the slave and a belief that Northern victory would secure emancipation. The locally perceived difference between these respective independence movements was explained by a Northern supporter, W. Hobkirk, in a letter to the Hawick Advertiser:

> The Italian rebellion was that of almost a whole nation against a despot. The Polish movement is similar. But this American rebellion has no parallel in history. The South have never been able to point to a single unconstitutional act on the part of the Government as a cause of rebellion, nor have they ever found fault with the laws of the Union, but instead have in fact, since their rebellion, generally adopted them.[86]

This support for Italian nationalism alongside support for the Northern States does not appear so contradictory when we see that the same phenomenon occurred in Lancashire. On the whole, Augar argued that "those men who supported the Italian independence movement were pro-Northern."[87] He also showed that out of thirty-three cotton towns which expressed interest in the Italian cause, twenty-seven were pro-North, and only six pro-South, explaining this by suggesting that individuals resolved the apparent contradiction "according to the direction other factors suggested."[88] By this, he referred to factors such as political reform, one's radical leanings, and one's belief in American democratic institutions. From the above quote by Hobkirk, we can see that radicals in Hawick were concentrating, not on the faction demanding independence, but on the government being rebelled against. In this instance, therefore, Hobkirk was critical of the Italian and Polish despotic governments; but he was resolute that the American federal government had done nothing to justify rebellion. It also indicates that there may have

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86 The Hawick Advertiser, 2.5.63.

87 Augar, 'Cotton Famine', pp. 341-2.

88 Augar, 'Cotton Famine', pp. 341-2.

been sympathy among Hawick's pro-Northern supporters for the American form of government, a fact consistent with the town's radical past.

The year 1863 represented the peak of pro-Northern sentiment in Galashiels and Hawick. Further pro-North lectures were a common feature, giving further weight to the argument that there was a pro-Northern slant in the area.[89] The two main newspapers in the region differed slightly in their approaches: the Border Advertiser admitted that its sympathies were not so much pro-South as they were anti-North. The paper roundly condemned the pro-North movement in the Borders as manipulative and misinformed, and argued that the North had no more intention of abolishing slavery than had the South. The Hawick Advertiser's views were less strident, and for much of 1863, it refrained from making significant comment upon the Civil War. It was certainly less critical of the pro-North movement than the Border Advertiser, and suggested that George Thompson could well convince Southern sympathisers in the town that the North deserved their support.[90]

1864-1865: Continuing Prosperity

The following year saw trade continuing to flourish in the Borders, as well as the acknowledgement that the prosperity was caused to a great degree by the American War. As in 1863, there was overwhelming support for neutrality. We already know that 1864 saw most interest moving to the Dano-German War, so there was less comment upon the Civil War in the region than in previous years. There were further pro-Northern meetings in the area, however, and little illustration of Southern support.[91] At the dinner of the Manufacturers' Corporation at Galashiels Public Hall in October, Sir William Scott, Liberal MP, commented that "we are actual gainers by a war in which we do not

89 The Border Advertiser, 16.1.63, 17.4.63, 4.11.64; the Hawick Advertiser, 18.7.63, 4.6.64, 11.2.65.

90 The Hawick Advertiser, 11.5.63.

91 The Hawick Advertiser, 4.6.64; the Border Advertiser, 4.11.64.

participate, and which, while depressing one part of our commerce has raised and increased many others." Sir William then went on to describe the commercial relations between Britain and America, and the gold currency which Britain gained through this trade. He added that "I sincerely trust our transactions with that hemisphere will be limited to commerce, and that they will never be so misguided as to wish to encounter us with any other metal than gold."[92] It would appear that, as Botsford suggested, Sir William was suggesting that British involvement in the American War would be injurious to trade, an implication that the continuance of the Civil War was benefiting the woollen industry.[93] In Selkirk, meanwhile, evidence appeared which illustrated that there was very little pro-Southern sympathy in that town. A pro-South organisation, entitled 'The Society for Promoting the Cessation of Hostilities in America' and headed by a Royal Navy Rear-Admiral, T.V. Anson, left a petition in Selkirk Reading Room which called on local people to sign it in support of the Confederacy.[94] Nobody in Selkirk signed the petition, thereby illustrating a lack of support for the Confederacy in that woollen town too. Even the mood of the Border Advertiser was shifting by the end of 1864, when it declared that the re-election of President Lincoln illustrated that the Northern people must support the Northern War policy after all.[95]

In the final year of the War, support for the Northern States continued, especially amongst a great number of the townspeople of Hawick.[96] In January 1865, the Border Advertiser criticised the motives of Northern supporters in Britain as a whole, accusing the Radicals of manipulating the War situation to push forward their own ideologies. The paper denied that the issue of majority-rule played any part in the War:

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92 The Border Advertiser, 14.10.64.
93 Botsford, 'Civil War', vol.1, p. 449.
94 The Border Advertiser, 23.10.64.
95 The Border Advertiser, 25.11.64.
96 The Hawick Advertiser, 11.2.65.

> the measure of freedom and worth of governments have not been in a relation to any questions of majority or minority at all. It is not from the number of fractions composing the governing unit, but from the wisdom and justice in the ruling power that good government proceeds.[97]

This is interesting because it illustrated how important attitudes towards democracy were in the formulation of Civil War opinions in the Borders, as well as in Dumfriesshire and Paisley. Not only was the Border Advertiser critical of Northern supporters in Britain, it was also keen to deny that the Civil War rested on principles such as majority rule, in order to disassociate the North from the cause of democracy.

Once Southern defeat was certain, both papers praised the Confederates for their brave struggle, and the Hawick Advertiser called on the South to end the War as quickly as possible.[98] Following the assassination of Lincoln, the Border Advertiser praised the dead President: "he had none of the characteristics of a tyrant, none of that imperiousness, even, which always marks the action of every man of original genius in such a crisis as that through which he has guided the State."[99] The paper also described the horror which was felt by the townspeople of Galashiels on receiving the news about the assassination. On 5th May, a meeting was called in Hawick by the Friends of Union and Emancipation to express sympathy at the loss of President Lincoln and to congratulate the American Government on their recent military victory. The meeting was described as being well-attended. Bailie Waugh was called to the chair and declared that he had always believed that the North was in the right, that he could not understand how anybody could have felt differently, and that eventually everybody would agree that the right side had been victorious. The Reverend James McEwan then proposed the address to be sent to President Johnson. (See Appendix 2) Mr Robert Ewen, manufacturer, seconded the address, and went on to discuss a statement from the Scotsman which had stated that "the

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97 The Border Advertiser, 20.1.65.

98 The Hawick Advertiser, 22.4.65; the Border Advertiser, 21.4.65.

99 The Border Advertiser, 28.4.65.

universal displays of sympathy were not with the cause of the North, but with the grief of the North." Mr Ewen stressed that the meeting sympathised with the Northern cause as well as with their grief: "it is the cause of freedom against slavery, civilisation against barbarism - in short, good government against rebellion."[100] This final meeting illustrated three things. Firstly, it showed that the pro-Northern supporters in Hawick were as enthusiastic in their support for the concept of Union as they were for abolition. Secondly, it illustrated the irritation felt by Northern supporters in Hawick when confronted with criticism such as that from the Scotsman about their motives. Finally, it illustrated that even when the War was over, pro-Northern feelings among Hawick's citizens remained as strong as ever. A desire to see the War prolonged in order to benefit the local woollen trade was clearly not their motive.

Conclusion: The Impact of Economic Prosperity upon Civil War Attitudes

Northern support clearly predominated in the Scottish Borders during the American Civil War, with very little evidence of support for the Confederacy. Even the newspapers and individuals who were hostile to the North did not offer continuous support to the Confederacy. Active Northern agitation arose in 1863 and continued until the end of the War, with no pro-South meetings taking place at any time during the War, despite the fact that there was clearly some dissident pro-South feeling at the meetings held in favour of the North. It has been demonstrated in this chapter that political factors were much more important than economic factors in leading to this pro-Northern stance.

Initially, the War affected the Borders woollen industry adversely, and at this time, most commentators in the area demanded an early termination of the American troubles. It has been shown, however, that neither side was particularly favoured during

[100] The Border Advertiser, 12.5.65.

this period of hardship, and that, in essence, people supported whatever was the quickest way to bring about a termination, whether that be the South going free or returning to the Union in its old position. As the War progressed, there was little support for Southern recognition or mediation. This was most likely due to anti-Southern feeling, rather than a material incentive, as there is no evidence to suggest that commentators supported a cynical prolongation of the Civil War in order to bring further benefit to the local woollen industry. Wright also found this to be the case in Bradford and Leeds, describing how:

> the influence of economic motives was much less apparent in the woollen districts of Yorkshire than in Lancashire ... It is true that worsteds, in particular, became a partial substitute for cotton, but there is no sign that the extra sales created any overt desire for a prolonged war.[101]

This phenomenon can be explained primarily because contemporary commentators, hoping for a cynical prolongation of the Civil War in order to benefit the woollen trade could have just as easily supported the South in the belief that this would prolong the War. This would have been especially the case in 1864 and 1865, when the North's military campaign was moving forward. Instead, reality proved that support for the North strengthened in Hawick and Galashiels as the War progressed, and this therefore suggests that other factors were instrumental in this support. Borders commentators based their support for the North on matters of principle, such as slavery and democracy, rather than economic expediency. This clearly supports Augar's thesis on platforms of support in Lancashire during the American Civil War, rather than Ellison's, whose work stated that War sympathies were primarily dictated by economic circumstances. In the Borders, as Augar and Wright described with respect to Lancashire and Yorkshire, other factors were more important, specifically political opinions and a tendency towards radicalism.

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101 Wright, 'Leeds and the Civil War', p. 97.

The assertion here is that the defining cause of the pro-Northern sentiment in Hawick and Galashiels was the political attitude of those advocating the cause of the North. This attitude was strongly established in both towns, as we have seen, and formed the basis of Northern support. In Galashiels the War was specifically associated by pro-Northerners with the radical cause, or at least, the Southern cause was associated with anti-reformism.[102] In fact, in a letter to the Border Advertiser, an anonymous Northern supporter argued that:

> There may be those in the country who would glory in the destruction of the Republic. But they are not to be found among the enlightened and liberal of our upper classes, nor among the great body of intelligent working men. They are among those who have deprived the working-man of his undoubted political rights.[103]

This illustrated that sympathy with the cause of universal suffrage was another factor in the existence of Northern support. Wright also argued that in Leeds, "until slavery became the overriding issue, attitudes towards manhood suffrage mainly determined views on the Civil War."[104] It can be concluded that to attribute Civil War opinions merely to economic circumstances is too simplistic and ignores the contribution which radical views and anti-slavery feelings made to the debate. This examination of the Borders woollen towns also illustrates the importance of recognising the distinctiveness of local political cultures in the formation of opinions on national and international events. From this, it can be seen that rather than the events of the American Civil War moulding opinion in the Borders on the War, it was the existence of a local political culture which tended to override individual events. This illustrates the importance of examining the attitude of different Scottish regions to the American Civil War, as distinct cultures were often more important than the War itself in formulating wartime opinion.

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102 The Border Advertiser, 22.5.63.

103 The Border Advertiser, 22.5.63.

104 Wright, 'Leeds and the Civil War', p. 120.

Chapter 11: The Influence of the Civil War upon Political Reform, 1865-68

Chapter 11: The Influence of the American Civil War upon British Political Reform, 1865-68

The study of the impact of the American Civil War upon Britain has also centred upon the War's effect upon post-war political developments, especially the 1865 General Election and the 1867 Reform Act (1868 Reform Act in Scotland). The debate over the extent of the Civil War's influence on these political developments is, by its very nature, one which encompasses the national reaction to the Civil War and the other factors which influenced the 1865 General Election and the passing of the Second Reform Act. It is therefore inadvisable to examine the local electoral contests and campaigns for political reform in isolation and separate from the important national debates and developments which were ongoing. This chapter therefore concentrates specifically upon the influence which the Civil War had upon the British political scene in the late 1860s, and uses the experience of Dumfriesshire, Paisley, and the Scottish Borders, to provide local evidence to support the main contention of this chapter: that while the Northern victory in the American Civil War was a contributory factor to the conditions which led to political reform in Britain, it was not the most important factor in either the General Election or the Reform campaign.

This chapter must combine the study of the national and the local political environments because the Reform campaign was essentially fought in two arenas: the parliamentary scene at Westminster, and in the public agitation of 1866 and 1867. Neither arena was mutually exclusive, and the momentum for Reform swung between the two, with the Second Reform Act eventually coming to fruition as a result of Disraeli's desire to introduce a Conservative Bill which would quell the public agitation for a generation. It will be shown that the influence of the American Civil War was greatest in the realm of the public agitation, and this exploration of the experience of the Scottish localities will attempt to measure and evaluate the importance of the War to both the local and the national Reform campaigns.

The Influence of the American Civil War upon the 1865 General Election

The first significant step towards political reform was the 1865 Election which took place on July 13th, 1865, just three months after the end of the American Civil War. The election witnessed an upsurge in support for the Liberal party across the country, and especially in Scotland, where a number of renowned radicals were elected to serve at Westminster. The question we need to address is whether or not the Northern victory in the American Civil War was influential in this Liberal victory, or whether the results were determined by national and local factors, unconnected with the Civil War.

Care should be taken when examining the General Election results of 1865, so as not to attribute too great a causal relationship between the Northern victory in the Civil War and the results of the election. Previous studies of the effect of the Civil War upon Britain and Scotland have tended to exaggerate the links between the War and the General Election. Adams, for example, depicted the election as one in which pro-Northern candidates were victorious, and pro-Confederates were defeated.[1] Botsford also argued along this line, suggesting that Conservative prospects were damaged by their association with the Confederacy, while Liberals were boosted by their sympathy with the North.[2] Finnie went even further, arguing that "the Northern victory became a root cause of some of the difficulties and unpopularity which faced Tory and anti-reform Whig candidates at this time."[3] Certainly, none of these arguments are incorrect, in that supporters of the North were more likely to be elected than Southern sympathisers, but was the Civil War the cause of this phenomenon, or was there an equally strong correlation between the results and the desire for political reform at this time?

The role which the reform question played during the election of 1865 is much debated. Some reform historians have claimed that the issue was not part of the national

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1 Adams, Civil War, vol. 2, p. 302.

2 Botsford, 'Civil War', vol. 2, p. 849.

3 Finnie, 'Reconstruction', vol.1, p. 293.

campaigns, and was used in the vast minority of local contests.[4] Others, however, such as Winter, have suggested that "During the election of 1865 many candidates had expressed pro-reform sentiments, and as a result of that election an increased number of 'advanced' Liberals were returned."[5] This thesis has found that, in the case of the Scottish constituencies studied, reform was the primary concern amongst electors, and the subject upon which the majority of candidates made regular comment. The American Civil War, on the other hand, drew little or no comment, either in relation to the attitudes of sitting M.P.s upon the war, or in relation to the issue of political reform. The only way in which the Civil War was used in the election campaign, was to castigate the Conservative party or praise the Liberal party for their positions upon the question of British intervention. In Dumfriesshire, for example, an anonymous farmer condemned Major George Walker, the Tory candidate for the county seat, for belonging to a party which "would have involved us [in a war] with the United States."[6] William Ewart, in an election address at Annan on 6th July, 1865, praised the Liberal government for its policy of non-interference, arguing that:

> It would have been folly and madness to have interfered with the slave states and acknowledged their position as a nation: it would have been folly and madness to have recognised such a right, and I rejoice to think that the ministers refused to do it.[7]

There is no evidence to suggest that the Northern victory in the Civil War was used to defend reform arguments, although anti-reformers still continued to use the example of the United States to condemn democracy, despite the Northern victory in the Civil War. Unfavourable comment was made about the operation of the ballot in America during the

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4 Smith, Second Reform Bill, p. 50; Herrick, 'The Reform Bill of 1867', p. 222.
5 Winter, 'The Cave of Adullam', p. 39.
6 The Dumfries Standard, 8.7.65.
7 The Dumfries Standard, 8.7.65.

hustings for the moderate-Liberal candidate for the Dumfries Burghs, Clark Kennedy.[8] The Conservative Dumfries Herald suggested that the British people would overwhelmingly support the Conservatives for their stance on reform because of the American experience: "the late civil war and present confusion in America are warning us still more strongly to rest content with our own Constitution."[9] In the Selkirkshire election, an interesting exchange occurred between the sitting Tory candidate, Lord Henry Scott and hecklers at a local meeting. In defending the British constitution, Scott asked the crowd, "Do you wish for a democracy like America?" and was greeted with "cries of 'yes,' with cheers and hisses." He then went on, "Do you wish for a democracy like that of France?" to which the crowd responded "no," with one voice shouting "we'll go as far as America." Uproar then took over the meeting.[10] Scott's hostility to reform and the electors' feelings towards him was illustrated by the Selkirk riots which followed his re-election.

When examining the outcome of the various parliamentary contests across Scotland, one needs to be aware of the importance of local factors above all else. In some seats, such as Roxburghshire (Sir William Scott, Liberal) and Dumfriesshire (George Walker, Tory), no opposition existed to the sitting candidates. In Selkirkshire, the Tory candidate, Lord Henry Scott, had a majority of 31 over the Liberal candidate, William Napier, but it was alleged that 180 voters were non-resident.[11] In the Dumfries Burghs, William Ewart had been the town's M.P. for over 23 years and had clearly built up a great deal of loyalty; while in a seat such as the Paisley Burghs, with its distinct radical creed, the Liberal candidate Sir Humphrey Crum Ewing was a clear favourite to win the seat. One also needs to remember that this research has shown that few local M.P.s were

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[8] The Dumfries Standard, 15.7.65.
[9] The Dumfries Herald, 7.7.65.
[10] The Hawick Advertiser, 22.7.65.
[11] The Dumfries Standard, 2.8.65.

willing to favour either side during the American Civil War, and it is therefore impossible to know whether the War was a large factor in electors' minds.

It is undisputed that the Liberals enjoyed a huge victory in the 1865 General Election in Scotland, with many radicals such as Duncan McLaren and Laurence Oliphant elected for the first time. While it is true, as Finnie points out, that these men were Northern advocates during the American Civil War, it is perhaps more accurate to attribute their triumphs to their support for political reform. It is easy to get carried away with aligning the issue of reform too closely with the Civil War, when there were a number of factors responsible for the prominence of the reform issue in the 1860s. This is not to say, however, that the American Civil War played no part in the Liberal victory of 1865. The government's refusal to intervene in the War stood them in good stead during the campaign, and the importance of the reform question in local campaigns was at least boosted by the Northern victory. Likewise, those candidates who favoured reform gained an advantage from the victory, although we need to point out that the very fact that the American Civil War had occurred was still used by Conservative and Liberal anti-reformists as an argument against reform.

The Influence of the American Civil War upon the 1867 Reform Act

The Northern victory in the American Civil War has also been credited as being partly responsible for the passing of the 1867 Reform Act, which was passed for Scotland in 1868. This thesis argues that while the American Civil War was an important factor in the movement towards political reform in Britain, it was not the only factor. It was certainly not responsible for the passing of the legislation at that particular time, but it did help to create the circumstances in which reform became possible. It will be argued that there were a number of causes leading to the Reform Act of 1867: public agitation, especially after the collapse of the 1866 Reform Bill; overseas events, especially in

America, Italy and Poland; economic distress across Britain; and political expediency. It is the intention of this thesis to avoid advocating a single factor as the reason behind the 1867 Reform Act, and to instead approach the legislation as the result of a multitude of factors.

As was the case when examining the results of the 1865 General Election, it is easy to overemphasise the importance of the American Civil War to the 1867 Reform Act. Harrison criticised those historians who have concentrated too narrowly upon class struggle and party conflict as simple explanations for the passing of the Reform Act,[12] and the same criticism can be equally levelled at those Civil War historians who exaggerate the influence of the War upon the Reform legislation.[13] Advocates of the view that the American Civil War was a primary cause of the 1867 Reform Act point to the influence of the War on two fronts. Firstly, they argue that the peaceful conduct of the cotton operatives was used by pro-reform politicians and agitators as evidence of the suitability of the working classes to possess the vote. Secondly, they claim that the Northern victory provided a major boost to the reform movement by the emphasis upon freedom and democracy which was the platform of its military campaigns. Supporters of these views include Finnie who argued that "the stirring image of United States democracy after the civil war did become a powerful stimulus for the stronger elements of Scottish reformist opinion."[14] Adams and Botsford also stressed the importance of the War in generating discussion on the reform question, and as a primary influence in the achievement of the Reform Act.[15] It is a mistake to overstress the influence of the War, however, because there were so many other factors clearly at play throughout the 1850s and the 1860s.

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12 See Harrison, Before the Socialists, pp. 129-33, for his criticism of T. Rothstein's From Chartism to Labourism, A.L. Morton & G. Tate's The British Labour Movement, and F.H. Herrick's Reform article in the Pacific Historical Review 3(1934), pp. 216-33.

13 Finnie, 'Reconstruction'; Botsford, 'Civil War'; Allen, 'Civil War'; Adams, Civil War.

14 Finnie, 'Reconstruction', Vol. 1, p. 302.

15 Adams, Civil War, vol. 2, pp. 303-5; Botsford, 'Civil War', Vol. 2, p. 859.

The 1850s and 1860s saw democratic reform achieved by stealth in Britain. Three attempts were made at reform during the 1850s, and in 1860 a Reform Bill was introduced by the Liberal government, only to be defeated again. Following the death of Lord Palmerston in 1865, the new Prime Minister, Lord Russell, introduced the 1866 Reform Bill, which was defeated by the Conservatives and the 'adullamite' group of anti-reformist Liberal M.P.s.[16] The defeat of this Reform Bill had two major effects: firstly, it led to the fall of the Liberal government, which was replaced by a Conservative administration under Lord Derby; and secondly, it created waves of discontent across Britain as political reform was delayed yet again. Disraeli, as Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Leader of the Government in the Commons, was able to introduce a Reform Bill which, as a result of Liberal party disarray and Conservative desires to pass a coherent Reform Bill and remain in office, was successfully guided through Parliament, and achieved more than Gladstone's 1866 Reform Bill. As a result of the public disturbances during the summer of 1866, and a desire to make sure that it was the Conservative party, and not the Liberal party, who introduced a definitive Reform Act which would quell reform agitation for the foreseeable future, Disraeli was therefore able to succeed where previous governments had failed. The 1860s was clearly a time when the issue of reform was very much in the air. Legislation was achieved through a combination of political agitation and party political expediency.

It is in the public agitation of 1866 and 1867 rather than in the Parliamentary arena that we must look to for the influence of the American Civil War upon reform. Examination of the Parliamentary debates of 1867 has shown that little allusion was made to the Northern victory in the Civil War by politicians.[17] Allen examined in more detail the effect of the Civil War upon Parliamentary reform debates, but tended to

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[16] John Bright applied the term 'adullamites' to the dissident Liberals, from the Biblical cave of Adullam (1. Sam. 22: 1-2) where the discontents joined David when he fled from Saul.

[17] Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Third Series, Vols. 186-89.

exaggerate its significance.[18] It is therefore the assertion here that the American Civil War played an important role in helping to create a climate in which reform became possible. The War, along with the visit of Garibaldi to Britain in 1864, was instrumental in vindicating reform sentiments which were already very much in the public mind. The Northern victory in the Civil War provided a boost to democratic arguments which would have been weakened had the Confederacy triumphed and undermined the 'democratic experiment' of the 'Model Republic'. Herrick stated that along with the Italian cause, "the American Civil War, and the tragic death of Lincoln in the hour of the vindication of the republic not only caught the imagination of Englishmen but furthered the idea of political progress,"[19] a view also echoed by Winter.[20] The fact that the Civil War was so instrumental in creating this climate of reform is hardly surprising. We have already seen the extent to which Northern sympathies alluded to the question of reform during the Civil War, so it was inevitable that the War would figure strongly in debates about reform after the War.

On a local level, Dumfries witnessed a good deal of agitation on the subject of reform in 1867. The first action took place on New Year's Day, 1867, when a Reform Demonstration, consisting mainly of the working classes of the town, took place. The demonstration called for manhood suffrage and the ballot, and was attended by 1200 people.[21] The meeting resulted in a petition being presented to Parliament by the town's M.P., William Ewart. The petition stated:

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18 Allen, 'Civil War', pp. 78-80.

19 Herrick, F.H. 'The Second Reform Movement in Britain 1850-1865', Journal of the History of Ideas 9 (Apr 1948), 174-93, p. 191.

20 Winter, 'The Cave of Adullam', p. 44.

21 The Dumfries Standard, 2.1.67.

> That this meeting protests against the present system of representation, whereby the people are amenable to laws in the making of which they have no voice, as opposed to justice and to the spirit of the Constitution of this country; and declares that no Reform Bill can be accepted as a settlement of the question unless it includes registered residential manhood suffrage protected by the ballot.[22]

The meeting did see some reference to the American Civil War in connection with reform. A speaker from London, Mr Mantle, referred to the support given to the Northern States by starving Lancastrians compared with aristocratic sympathy for the Confederacy. Mr Mantle also made reference to the political advantages enjoyed by Americans and pointed out that the British government had only remained neutral in the conflict because of pressure from the people.[23] Less reference was made to America at other times, despite the existence of a Dumfries and Galloway branch of the Scottish National Reform League. It would appear that there was significant support in Dumfries for democratic reform, regardless of the American Civil War. In March, 1867, approximately seventy people belonged to the Dumfries branch of the S.N.R.L. and in the same month, over 200 signatures were added to a local petition calling for the enfranchisement of women.[24] This is further evidence of a political tradition in Dumfries, and minimises the importance of the Civil War as a primary causal factor.

Other reform meetings took place in Paisley and the Scottish Borders, but again little mention was made of America. In Paisley, the town's M.P., Humphrey Crum Ewing spoke at a meeting on the question of Reform on 18th January 1867. He was extremely critical of the Adullamite group of Liberal M.P.s, and referred to the support for reform which existed in Paisley amongst the working classes and local manufacturers.[25] Meetings took place in Hawick and Galashiels on the reform issue during February and March, but again little mention was made of America. The most important thing to arise out of these

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22 The Dumfries Standard, 2.1.67, 10.4.67.
23 The Dumfries Standard, 2.1.67.
24 The Dumfries Standard, 16.3.67, 23.3.67.
25 The Scotsman, 21.1.67.

meetings, however, was the presence of individuals who were vociferous Northern supporters during the American Civil War.[26] This provides further evidence that activists were motivated by political principle during the War.

Attempts at reform were made in 1852, 1854, 1859, and 1860, before the American Civil War broke out, so clearly the 1867 Reform Act did not come about because of the American Civil War. Support for reform existed in the public mind, and little real opposition occurred in Parliament; apathy rather than hostility led to the many defeats of reform bills. After the end of the American Civil War, another attempt at reform occurred in 1866, in a bill introduced by Gladstone. The Civil War may have played its part here, as Gladstone had been impressed by the conduct of the distressed Lancashire operatives during the Cotton Famine. The failure of the 1866 Reform Bill, however, indicates that the influence of the Civil War was insufficient to guarantee reform in Britain. Without the necessary political support for a reform measure, no external pressure could hope to effect legislation. Reform was achieved in 1867 as a result of conducive political circumstances facilitated by Liberal party divisions and Disraeli's effective handling of both his own party and the opposition. In addition, however, Disraeli was reacting to the growing public dissatisfaction with the reform situation, dissatisfaction encouraged by the Northern victory in the American Civil War.

[26] The Scotsman, 12.2.67, 27.2.67, 21.3.67.

Conclusion

Conclusion

This thesis has illustrated the importance of exploring Scottish local attitudes towards the American Civil War. The lack of truly national newspapers in the modern sense meant that nineteenth century national and international events were discussed in the local press, and provided a local perspective upon international affairs which is entirely lacking in the twentieth century. It has also demonstrated that Scotland comprised many distinctive local regions with their own political and social cultures. These cultures contributed to both their perceptions of themselves and the outside world, and as a result, the American Civil War was viewed not only on a British, or even Scottish, level, but on a local level. The distinctive blend of industrial economics, political consciousness, and social composition within these Scottish localities led to equally distinctive reactions to the American Civil War. It has been comprehensively demonstrated that Scottish commentators were clearly interested in the American Civil War, and the issues which the conflict aroused. There were three main reasons for this interest, above and beyond the interest which any overseas conflict would generate. The first reason concerned the ties which connected Scotland and America, and which led to a feeling of empathy and distress at a conflict involving family and friends.[1] The second reason for this interest was the fascination with which Scottish commentators viewed the American democratic and social experiment and how they saw the future of this experiment as a result of the Civil War. In addition to the Scottish interest in the progress of the conflict on the other side of the Atlantic, interest was also generated by the economic effects which the American Civil War created in Britain, and particularly in the Scottish regions which this thesis has examined.

Put into perspective, this field of study, namely the British experience of the American Civil War, was given proper academic treatment for the first time in 1925, with

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[1] See the Dumfries Courier on page 172.

the publication of E.D. Adams' Great Britain and the American Civil War.[2] His discussion of Great Britain's reaction to the Civil War provided the framework for the subsequent work which followed. Botsford's 1955 thesis was the first in-depth study of Scotland and the American Civil War, following a short article on Dundee and the Civil War in 1953 by Carrie.[3] Since this period there has been a move towards a more specialised local treatment of the British experience of the American Civil War, especially from the late 1960s onwards: the main examples being Greeves, Henderson, Ellison, and Augar.[4] This thesis adds to these local studies, as well as to the work already done on Scotland and the American Civil War by Botsford, Carrie, Finnie, Szasz, and Ranson.[5] In summary, this new contribution is important because it attempts to fill a gap which has existed in a number of areas: firstly, it helps to fill the void in nineteenth century Scottish-American studies, reinforcing the importance of the relationship between the two countries well beyond the Revolutionary period. Secondly, it provides a much needed local approach to the study of Scotland and the American Civil War. Thirdly, it provides vital new information about the economic effect of the American Civil War upon Scotland, an area neglected in the past, save for Botsford and Henderson's examinations of the Glasgow cotton industry during the War.[6] We have seen, for example, how the Dumfriesshire bacon industry was hit, and how the distinctive nature of Paisley's cotton thread industry managed to survive the ravages of the War, despite the devastating long-term damage that the War did to the wider Scottish cotton industry.[7] Fourthly, the field of local history has been strengthened in a small way, especially the history of the South

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2 Adams, Civil War.

3 Botsford, 'Civil War'; Carrie, Dundee and the Civil War.

4 Greeves, 'Civil War'; Henderson, Cotton Famine; Ellison, Support for Secession; Augar, 'Cotton Famine'.

5 Botsford, 'Civil War'; Carrie, Dundee and the Civil War; Finnie, 'Reconstruction'; Szasz, 'Civil War'; Ranson, The Mad Hatter of Aberdeen.

6 Botsford, 'Civil War', vol. 1, pp. 391-427; Henderson, Cotton Famine, pp. 119-31.

7 See pages 155-61, and 201-09.

of Scotland, which has often been neglected in favour of the Scottish cities and the Highlands. Finally, this thesis contributes to the growing amount of work carried out on the subject of Paisley and its radical past, by providing an analysis of the town in the relatively quiet mid-nineteenth century period.[8] Analysis of the town's reactions to the American Civil War helps to provide an insight into continuing radical sentiments, despite domestic calm.

Examination of the economic impact of the War has shown that the Dumfriesshire economy suffered a very particular effect, as the Civil War caused a downturn in the agricultural business upon which the region was reliant. The War caused this downturn in two ways: firstly, because of the effect which the Cotton Famine had upon Dumfriesshire's main market; and secondly, because of the sudden influx of cheap bacon from the Northern States which adversely affected the local bacon industry.[9] During the winter of 1862-63, the Cotton Famine was at its peak, and also coincided with the winter bacon season in Dumfriesshire, a produce which the county's farmers relied upon in the winter months.[10] Paisley was more directly hit by the effects of the Cotton Famine. The shortage of cotton which intensified at the beginning of 1863 caused short-time working and factory closures amongst the Paisley thread manufacturers.[11] Specialising in the cotton thread industry, the town suffered less than the cotton manufacturing areas of the West of Scotland and Lancashire, but nevertheless still suffered the negative effects of the Civil War. The Borders region was one of the few areas of Scotland which actually benefited from the War. Depending upon the woollen manufacturing industry, the region gained from the rise in demand for domestic woollens which arose out of cotton shortages, and also gained some of the increased trade resulting from increased American demand.[12]

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8 See pages 91-113.

9 See pages 150-66.

10 See the Dumfries Standard on page 151.

11 See Table 8.1 on page 203.

12 See the Border Advertiser on pages 285-87.

Having determined the economic effect which the American Civil War had upon these Scottish regions, their reaction to the War was also examined. In Dumfriesshire, where the agricultural trade was disrupted, but which escaped large-scale industrial distress, commentators sympathised with the Confederacy or remained neutral. While there was little public interest in the conflict in Dumfriesshire, the interest which was generated in the local press depended upon commentators' attitudes towards democratic reform. Those who were hostile towards reform strongly supported the Confederacy, and this was best exemplified by the stance taken by the Dumfries Herald, which envisaged the failure of the North and the consequences which this would have upon British attempts at democratic reform.[13] Supporters of reform, on the other hand, exercised neutrality on the Civil War, tending towards Northern support at times.[14] In the town of Paisley, the reaction to the Civil War was divided between those commentators with a moderate-liberal outlook, and those who were radical-reformists. This divide meant that Paisley represented a microcosm of Liberal opinion in Britain as a whole, with respect to attitudes on the American Civil War. Moderate-liberals, represented by the local newspapers, overwhelmingly supported the Confederacy, outwardly on the grounds of the right of the South to self-determination.[15] Radical-reformers, on the other hand, supported the Northern States out of sympathy for democracy and freedom, as exemplified by the activities of the Paisley Parliamentary Reform Association during July and August 1862.[16] Again, as in Dumfriesshire, Paisley's reaction depended overwhelmingly upon attitudes towards political reform in Britain. In the Scottish Borders towns of Hawick and Galashiels the Paisley situation was mirrored, as the local newspapers expressed sympathy with the Confederacy,[17] while local activists supported

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13 See page 188.

14 See the Dumfries Standard on pages 179-81.

15 See the Glasgow Saturday Post on page 242-3, and the Paisley Herald on page 248-49.

16 See pages 243-48.

17 See the Border Advertiser on page 302.

the North.[18] The Borders, like Paisley, was an area with a strong liberal tradition which resulted in Northern support.

The first major theme which arises from this thesis is the importance of principle in determining Civil War opinion. This has been demonstrated by the emergence of four main trends. The first has already been alluded to in this conclusion: the split which developed among Liberals with regard to the American Civil War. This trend was typical of that which occurred in Britain as a whole. Liberals on the Palmerstonian wing of the party were suspicious of democratic reform in Britain, and tended to support the Confederacy. Radicals, on the other hand, supported comprehensive reform of the electoral system, and supported the North in the Civil War. We have witnessed this tendency in the three regions under discussion: the Palmerstonian stance was usually manifested in the views of newspaper correspondents and politicians, while radical positions were expressed by political groups who favoured reform. The second trend shows that party political groupings cannot be used to determine attitudes held on the American Civil War. This fact has been asserted by a number of historians,[19] but this thesis adds weight to this point, especially with regard to the number of Liberal commentators who were sympathetic to the Confederacy. The third trend suggests that attitudes towards electoral reform were crucial in determining Civil War opinions. A correlation has emerged between the strong pro-reform sentiments of groups such as the P.P.R.A. and the Hawick activists, and sympathy for the Northern States; while those against reform, or at least cautious about it, such as the Dumfries Herald and the Paisley Herald, were more inclined to support the Confederacy. A fourth trend has also emerged which further strengthens the argument that principle was the motivating factor behind

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[18] See pages 304-09.

[19] Hernon, 'British Sympathies'; Botsford, 'Civil War', vol.2, pp. 868-9; Augar, 'Cotton Famine', p. 357; Wright, 'Bradford and the Civil War', p.1; Wright, 'Leeds and the Civil War', p.1; Whitridge, 'British Liberals'.

Civil War attitudes. This thesis has found, in support of Augar's work,[20] that those areas which saw significant support for the Italian, Polish, and Hungarian nationalist causes were also more likely to witness strong support for the Northern States, as we saw in Hawick and Paisley.[21] This illustrates that the Northern cause was adopted as a 'radical' cause, alongside these European struggles. This is interesting, because initially one might have assumed that the Confederate struggle for independence and freedom shared more similarities with the struggles of the Poles, Italians, and Hungarians, than the Northern struggle for Union did. We have seen, however, that radicals espoused the cause of the North as a fight for democracy and equality alongside the European struggles for freedom. Supporters of these European causes and the Northern cause went to great lengths to defend this combination of views, such as the explanation provided by Hobkirk of Hawick, who argued that the Italian and Polish causes were rebellions against despotisms, but that the South had no such justifiable complaint against the federal government.[22]

The second theme which has arisen from this research is the lack of influence which economic factors played in the determination of Civil War opinions. This contradicts Ellison in her study of Lancashire's reaction to the War, but concurs with Augar's conclusion that factors other than economic were relevant.[23] It is true that Dumfriesshire mirrored Ellison's description of the rural West of Lancashire in many ways, due to its agriculture base, and the fact that it showed less interest in the American Civil War than other areas.[24] This thesis has shown, however, that this was less to do with the effect of the Civil War upon these regions, than with their economic composition. Industrial areas tended to be more politically aware than agricultural areas,

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20 Augar, 'Cotton Famine', pp. 341-42.

21 See pages 307-09, and 281.

22 See page 308.

23 Ellison, Support for Secession, pp. 190-6; Augar, 'Cotton Famine', pp. 355-62.

24 Ellison, Support for Secession, pp. 16, 27-8; and pages 167-97 above.

and this explains why people in Paisley and the woollen manufacturing towns of Hawick and Galashiels showed more interest in the American Civil War than the people of Dumfriesshire. One reason why this thesis refutes the idea that economic factors determined Civil War opinions was that Paisley and the Borders, while experiencing opposite effects as a result of the War, exhibited remarkably similar tendencies with respect to their Civil War attitudes. They were both home to Liberal newspapers which supported the Confederacy, and local political activists who campaigned for the Northern States. This, despite the fact that Paisley was suffering as a result of the War, and the Borders was prospering because of the War. In neither place was the economic effect of the War mentioned by campaigners, to indicate that their Civil War opinions were economically motivated.[25] Similarly, neither side in the conflict was blamed for local economic conditions, as in the descriptions of Paisley newspaper comment on economic conditions, and the Paisley campaigns for greater relief for the unemployed.[26] A similar picture was drawn for the Borders, and was reinforced by the work of Wright on the reaction of Bradford and Leeds to the Civil War, in which he found no evidence to suggest that prosperous economic conditions led to hope for a prolonged war.[27]

This analysis is particularly significant because of the importance it has assigned to the study of locality. This has been important both for international Civil War studies and for the study of local history for its own sake. In the first sense, this thesis adds a new local dimension to the study of Scotland and the American Civil War, which is important because it marks a shift away from an overly general consideration of Scotland. These distinctive local cultures, exemplified by the longstanding political tradition in Paisley, proved decisive in the formulation of Civil War opinions.[28] This local approach has also

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[25] See pages 243-48, and 304-09.

[26] See pages 201-23.

[27] See pages 284-89, 304-09, and Wright, 'Bradford and the Civil War', and 'Leeds and the Civil War'.

[28] See pages 243-48, and 270-71.

illustrated the importance of local economics in demonstrating the different effects of the American Civil War upon Scotland. Given that some areas benefited from the War while others suffered, it is clear that the War did not have a uniform effect, and it has enabled us to gauge the level of importance which should be given to economic factors in the formulation of Civil War attitudes. This concentration upon localities has also proved important in adding to the study of local history from a purely Scottish perspective. In particular, it has added to the work carried out on Paisley's radical history by Clarke and Dickson, and Macdonald, and has attempted to fill the gap between the 1840s and the 1880s which has not been covered by their work.[29] It has reinforced their findings which pointed to the existence of a strong political ethos in the town. While a reasonable amount of work has been carried out on the nineteenth century history of Paisley, however, very little work has been done on the history of Dumfriesshire and the Borders, except for the agricultural history of the former by Campbell.[30] While a good deal of work has been done on the history of the Highlands, the rural communities of Dumfries and Galloway and the Borders have been neglected.[31] This thesis has contributed to the history of these regions by examining their nineteenth century social, economic, and political experiences.

This analysis is also significant because of the examination which has been made of the antebellum period, which has proved important for two reasons. Firstly, it has illustrated that America continued to arouse interest in Scotland throughout the mid-nineteenth century period, augmenting the links which were established between the two countries in the eighteenth century. This thesis has therefore added to the literature which already exists on Scottish-American relations, covering the much neglected

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[29] Clarke & Dickson, 'Class and Class Consciousness'; 'Social Concern and Social Control'; Macdonald, 'The Radical Thread'; 'The Vanduaria of Ptolemy'; 'Locality, Tradition and Language'.

[30] Campbell, Owners and Occupiers.

[31] See for a discussion on this point in Campbell, R.H. 'Too Much on the Highlands? A Plea for Change', Scottish Economic and Social History 14 (1994), 58-76.

nineteenth century. Secondly, this examination has shown that a continuity of opinion existed throughout this period. The main purpose of examining the antebellum period was to establish the origins of opinions expressed on the American Civil War, and this approach has proved to be extremely fruitful. It has found that the most consistent factor throughout the period was Scottish attitudes towards both democratic reform at home, and how these translated into views upon the American political system throughout the 1832-60 period. This proved vital in investigating the background to some of the inconsistencies which were uncovered between the antebellum and Civil War periods. For example, we saw how in the antebellum period a number of commentators were extremely critical of the Southern States of America on the grounds of slavery.[32] Even the Paisley Herald described how "there are more points of resemblance between American slaveholders and the Russian despot than the republican dealers in human flesh would like to admit."[33] During the Civil War, however, many of these commentators began to support the South. Analysis of the antebellum period has shown that it was usually the issue of democracy which was the deciding factor. In the 1840s and 1850s those against comprehensive democratic reform pointed to slavery in America, and while openly hostile to the Slave States, they were also implicitly critical of the American Constitution as a whole. Once the Civil War came, however, to criticise slavery too much would have implied support for the democratic North. Hence, a more detailed analysis of opinions during the antebellum period has helped to explain changes of opinion which had taken place by the time of the American Civil War.

The study of Scottish-American history has advanced in three main ways as a result of this work. Firstly, the study of Scotland and the American Civil War is much more detailed. On the world stage, Scotland is a very small country, and in this sense, Botsford's work was very specialised in the 1950s. Botsford, by his own admission,

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[32] See the Dumfries Courier on page 86-7, and the Glasgow Saturday Post on page 111.
[33] The Paisley Herald, 8.4.54.

however, offered a generalised account of Scotland's Civil War experience, which did not examine the diverse nature of the Scottish localities. This concentration upon the reaction of Scottish towns has shown that there were many diverse opinions in Scotland with regard to the American Civil War, which arose out of their different economic, social, and political identities. Generalised accounts elide this diversity, and can therefore only provide a very superficial analysis of this reaction. Secondly, the study of Scottish-American relations is also more detailed now, especially with respect to both the nineteenth century period in general, and the Civil War period in particular. While the Revolutionary War and the eighteenth century period have been the subject of a great deal of work, this later period has been less comprehensively examined. This thesis has illustrated the continuing interest of Scots in American affairs in the nineteenth century, and the continuing extent to which America continued to influence Scotland. Thirdly, it has been asserted many times already in this thesis that the serious academic study of local history has been woefully neglected. Two types of histories are available to us at the current time: nineteenth century works which go back to Roman times, but neglect social, political, and economic history in favour of narrative and parochial history; and the plethora of photographic and 'postcard' histories which fill modern bookshelves. This thesis attempts to cover an aspect of local history which is currently lacking, offering an analysis of the social, political, and economic identity of localities within the context of international events. It is to be partly expected that a certain amount of intellectual snobbery will exist about the value of local history as an academic subject. But it must be remembered that, during the nineteenth century, it was here that the attitudes of real people were to be found. Nineteenth century people did not live primarily in Scotland, Britain, or Europe; they lived in Dumfries, Paisley and Hawick. These places formed their frame of reference, and were where their sense of identity was to be found. Therefore, it is to the towns in which people lived that we must go to find an important

layer of Scottish or British opinions. In a world which did not know national newspapers, let alone modern communications, radio or television, the local environment was crucial to the construction of identity. This illustrates the necessity of good local history.

This thesis inevitably has its limitations, allowing opportunities for the development of future research. The main limitation is that one thesis cannot possibly cover all the Scottish localities, and there are a number of regions which demand greater treatment, including Aberdeen, Greenock and Dundee, although some work has been completed on the latter.[34] This thesis has also uncovered possible opportunities for research outside the field of Scotland's reaction to the American Civil War. The first opportunity exists with regard to Yorkshire's reaction to the War. A comprehensive amount of work has been done on Lancashire's economic and political reaction to the War, but Yorkshire's experience has been so far insufficiently examined. Greeves' work provided a full analysis of the economic effect of the War upon the county's woollen industry, but apart from two articles by Wright on the reaction of Leeds and Bradford to the Civil War, there is scope for more work to be done on the Yorkshire political reaction to the War.[35] This will add to the work done in this thesis upon the Borders woollen industry and provide further analysis upon the motives behind opinion in the prosperous areas of Britain during the American Civil War. A final opportunity for further research has been uncovered in a related area to the subject covered in this thesis. We have seen that at the same time as Scottish commentators were debating the issues of the American Civil War, they were also discussing the events in Europe concentrated in Italy, Poland and Hungary, and centred upon issues of nationality and independence. Very little work has been done on the Scottish reaction to these European political developments,[36] and

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34 Carrie, Dundee and the Civil War.

35 Greeves, 'Cotton Famine'; Wright, 'Bradford and the Civil War', and 'Leeds and the Civil War'.

36 See, for an example of work done on this topic, Fyfe, 'Scottish Volunteers with Garibaldi'.

given the regularity of comment upon these events, it is the assertion here that more research is needed into both the attitudes expressed on this subject and the motives behind such attitudes. Research of this kind will further strengthen our understanding of Scottish support for radical causes, which peaked in the 1850s and 1860s.

Scottish support for these European nationalist struggles in the 1850s and 1860s, and concurrent support for the Northern States during the American Civil War, reinforces the dominant contention of this thesis: that political principle was the main determinant of Scottish Civil War opinions. While there were undoubtedly individual instances where economic circumstance was an important factor in the formulation of Civil War attitudes, in the vast majority of cases squalid materialism was not a decisive factor. Instead, we have seen that commentators reached their conclusions about the American Civil War according to their principled stances on issues such as democracy, slavery, and the meaning of 'nationhood'. Hence, we have seen how areas as diverse as Dumfriesshire, Paisley, and the Scottish Borders towns of Hawick and Galashiels exhibited remarkably similar tendencies with regard to their Civil War attitudes, despite the very different effects which they experienced as a result of the American Civil War.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1

Address of the P.P.R.A. to the U.S. Government (Renfrewshire Independent, 26.7.62.)

"To His Excellency, Abraham Lincoln, President, and the Members of the Executive of the Government of the United States of America.

GENTLEMEN,- Ever since the period when your brave Fathers won for themselves on the battle-field the independence of their country, the down-trodden people of Europe, those patriots who have been forced to leave their native land to avoid the tyranny of despots, have found in America a resting-place and a home. Unlike the countries of the Old World, where the industrious classes are in political slavery, you enjoy the blessing of living under a constitution founded on the equal rights of man - a constitution which has had a long and successful trial, has demonstrated the capability of the people for self-government, and has contributed more than any other system of government hitherto established to forward the cause of freedom and civilisation. Under it the great end of government has been obtained - the greatest possible happiness to the greatest possible number. Seriously impressed with these ideas, we take the liberty of expressing to you our deep regret on learning the bold and daring attempt now making to separate the Southern States from the Union. Far distant from the scene of action,we can only assign two causes for this unwarrantable daring:- The deep chagrin of the Southern party that the power to govern the country has fallen from their hands, and their strong desire to perpetuate the slavery of the African race, an evil the people of America unfortunately inherited from Great Britain, and which is now threatening to destroy your excellent form of Government. The world and posterity will do you honour for your great forbearance at the commencement of this civil war. Not until the United States flag was deeply insulted did you give countenance to shedding the blood of a kindred race. We rest with confidence that the wealth, the patriotism, and dauntless bravery of the people of the North will enable you to put down this uncalled for rebellion. The gigantic efforts you have already made render you worthy of being placed side by side with the fathers of your great Republic. Trusting that an all-wise providence will guide your exertions to a successful issue, and that the time is not far distant when peace, union, and prosperity will be restored to your country, - we have the honour to be, Gentlemen, Yours truly, ALEXANDER McANDREW, Chairman

Paisley, 24th July, 1862. ROBERT COCHRAN, Secretary."

APPENDIX 2

Address of the Hawick Friends of Union and Emancipation, 5th May 1865 (Border Advertiser, 12.5.65.)

"To His Excellency Andrew Johnson, President of the United States of America.

Having heard with profound sorrow of the assassination of his Excellency President Lincoln, and the attempted assassination of the Honourable Mr Seward, we tender to you our deep sense of the wickedness of the atrocious crime that has been perpetrated, and our heartfelt sympathy with the American people under the heavy loss they have sustained in the untimely close of Mr Lincoln's great career.

While feeling deep sorrow for the death of that great and good man, to whose inflexibility of purpose and unswerving fidelity to great principles the American people have been so much indebted throughout the gigantic struggle in which they have been engaged, we cannot help expressing at the same time our high satisfaction at the recent great victories of your armies under General Grant over the Confederates at Richmond and Petersburg, the capture of these cities, the surrender of General Lee with the shattered remnant of his once formidable rebel army, and the subsequent successes of the army under General Sherman, resulting, as that brilliant series of events does, in the entire overthrow of one of the most gigantic conspiracies against the rights of mankind of which history contains any record, and giving confident hope of the complete restoration of the Union and the emancipation of the negro race.

We cannot doubt that the same policy which was so steadfastly and ably carried out by Mr Lincoln will be continued by yourself, on whom the highest responsibilities of the State have now devolved; and we trust that ere long the great issue of union and emancipation may be fully and happily consummated, and that the Union States, emancipated from the evil and disorganising institution of slavery, and from the dominating power of a slave aristocracy, may come out of this great crisis a yet purer, stronger, and freer nation; and that between her Government and ours, and her people and ours, feelings of amity and brotherhood may ever be maintained, and that the two nations, advancing together in righteousness, in commerce, and in moral power, may lead forward the nations of the world to higher conditions of prosperity, of happiness, and of justice than any that have yet been attained."

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